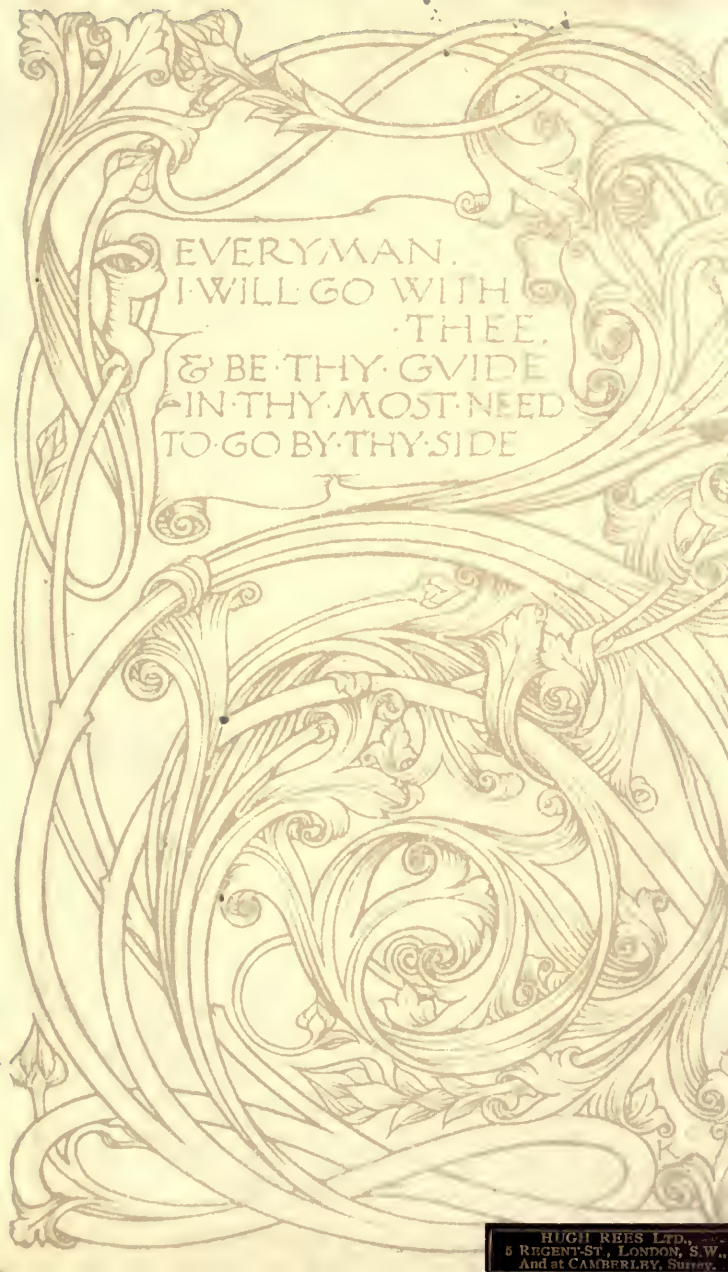

HUGH REES LTD.,
5 REGENT-ST., LONDON, S.W.,
And at CAMBERLEY, Surrey.

LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA
SAN DIEGO

THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO
LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA

EVERYMAN'S LIBRARY
EDITED BY ERNEST RHYS

100557

CLASSICAL

THE MUSES' PAGEANT
BY W. M. L. HUTCHINSON
VOLUME ONE

THE PUBLISHERS OF *EVERYMAN'S LIBRARY* WILL BE PLEASED TO SEND FREELY TO ALL APPLICANTS A LIST OF THE PUBLISHED AND PROJECTED VOLUMES TO BE COMPRISED UNDER THE FOLLOWING THIRTEEN HEADINGS:

TRAVEL ❧ SCIENCE ❧ FICTION
THEOLOGY & PHILOSOPHY
HISTORY ❧ CLASSICAL
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
ESSAYS ❧ ORATORY
POETRY & DRAMA
BIOGRAPHY
REFERENCE
ROMANCE

IN FOUR STYLES OF BINDING: CLOTH, FLAT BACK, COLOURED TOP; LEATHER, ROUND CORNERS, GILT TOP; LIBRARY BINDING IN CLOTH, & QUARTER PIGSKIN

LONDON: J. M. DENT & SONS, LTD.
NEW YORK: E. P. DUTTON & CO.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/musespageant01hutciala

THE
SAGES
OF OLD
LIVE
AGAIN
IN US
GLANVILL

THE MUSES' PAGEANT.

Myths & Legends of Ancient Greece retold by W·M·L· HUTCHINSON

· VOLUME 1 ·

MYTHS OF THE GODS

LONDON: PUBLISHED by J·M·DENT·&·SONS·LTD AND IN NEW YORK BY E·P·DUTTON&CO

THE TEMPLE PRESS, PRINTERS, LETCHWORTH

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION 1

PART I

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE TITANS

I. THE WORLD RULERS 13

II. THE MAKING OF MAN 33

III. PROMETHEUS BOUND 47

PART II

THE OLYMPIANS

IV. HERA, WIFE AND QUEEN 60

V. DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE 78

VI. ATHENA 99

VII. APOLLO 112

VIII. HERMES 141

IX. ARTEMIS 161

X. APHRODITE 172

XI. DIONYSUS 190

" La connaissance des contes helléniques, dont s'inspirent encore la littérature et l'art, est indispensable à tout homme cultivé."

S. Reinach.

INTRODUCTION

THE title of this book, the *Muses' Pageant*, may serve to indicate its scope and aim. Just as, in the spectacles that have lately become popular among us, the heroes and heroines of our island story pass over the scene in their habits as they lived; so, in these pages, the divine and human figures of the Greek Mythology are presented after a fashion which, it is hoped, may bring them more vividly before the mind's eye. The promoters of our modern English pageants lay stress on their value as object lessons in national or local history; and this collection of the myths of ancient Hellas has been made with a kindred purpose—to give the general reader a bird's-eye view, so to speak, of "the realms of gold."

Again, our Pageant, though set forth in prose, is of the Muses; in other words, the legends it reproduces are those immortalised by the Greek poets. Classical mythology may be broadly divided into (1) Popular, (2) Poetical; the former division is, of course, the foundation of the latter, and, as embodied in local cults and traditions, is of primary importance to the folklorist and the anthropologist. But that division "belongs to another inquiry;" it is the poetical mythology of Greece only with which we are here concerned; for it is that alone

which, through its profound influence on medieval and modern literature and art, has an abiding interest for "Everyman" to-day. And of this mythology, as the Greeks devoutly believed, the Muses were the authentic, infallible source.

For that beautiful conception of the relation between the Poet and the Muse—so familiar by endless repetition that it has lost its savour for us—was no mere trope or allegory to the people whose supreme poetic instinct created it. To the Greeks, the Nine Muses were not personified abstractions, but most real persons—"the clear-voiced daughters of Zeus," whom the Titaness Mnemosyne bore to him in a glen of Pieria; who had their chosen habitation on Mount Helicon in Boeotia; and whose delight was with the sons of men, insomuch that they disdained not to become the brides and mothers of mortals. Thus the sweet singers Orpheus and Linus, the beautful boy Hyacinthus whom Apollo loved, and the Thracian King Rhesus who came to the help of the Trojans against the Greeks, were the children of Muses by human sires. As for the functions of the Nine, the idea that each Sister had her own special department in poesy, music, or dancing was of comparatively late growth; in Homer, "the Bible of the Greeks," and Hesiod, their next earliest authority, it is the office of the Muses one and all to gladden the Gods banqueting on Olympus with their lovely choric song and dance, to the accompaniment of Apollo's golden lyre. It is also their common prerogative to inspire men on earth—if they are kings, with

all-prevailing eloquence—if bards, not only with poetic power and charm but with supernatural knowledge of divine things. Especially are they revealers of the true history of the Gods from the beginning—their pedigrees, births, natures, works, and ways; and to teach men this knowledge, so essential for the right performance of ritual, is the peculiar privilege of the Bard as the accredited servant and spokesman of the Muses.

It will be worth our while to notice briefly the unique importance among these inspired myth-makers which the Greeks attributed to the two poets just mentioned. "Hesiod and Homer," says the historian Herodotus in a famous passage, "*made a Theogony* for the Greeks;" that is to say, the poems which went under their names gave the earliest systematic accounts of the origins of the gods, combining the sporadic myths of different tribes and localities. Now, the "Homer" we know consists of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, in neither of which is there any such account; hence it is conjectured that Herodotus here ascribes to Homer himself a "Theogony" known to have been included in a lost series of epics (the so-called "Epic Cycle"), composed by members of the Ionian school or guild of poets who named themselves Homeridae—"sons of Homer"—after their founder. Neither fragments or notices of this Homeric Theogony survive; but we possess a hexameter poem entitled "The Theogony of Hesiod," which, though much mutilated and interpolated, is probably the work referred to by Herodotus. Whether any part of it is the actual

work of the real Hesiod, who lived in the Boeotian village of Asera, near Mount Helicon, about 850-800 B.C., need not concern us here; its special interest for us is that it embodies the mythological tradition handed down by a Hesiodic school of poets, who successfully claimed for their founder an authority equal to Homer's, if not greater, in virtue of his having received a direct revelation from the Muses on Mount Helicon. For, as "Hesiod" relates in a prologue to the "Theogony," they appeared to him there as he was keeping watch over his flock by night, and "taught him the art of beautiful song," and gave him a "fair branch of bay"—that badge of their profession wherewith minstrels were wont to mark the rhythm as they recited or sang. Then, having inspired him with divine utterance and insight, the Muses commanded Hesiod to celebrate in verse "the race of the blest Immortals," and evermore to preface and conclude his lays by invoking and praising the Ladies of Helicon.

This legend illustrates the point of view from which we find Hesiod invariably regarded in the literature of the great fifth and fourth centuries B.C. He stands side by side with Homer as an inspired theologian, whose scriptures are taught to children from their earliest years, and form the standard authority for poets who sing on sacred themes. (His equally high reputation as an *ethical* teacher may be just mentioned in passing; it was based on the "Works and Days," that curious and occasionally charming medley of agricultural, nautical, ceremonial, and moral precepts, inter-

spersed with mythological episodes, which all the ancients recognised as Hesiod's genuine and most characteristic work, and which gave Virgil the model for his "Georgics.") How the "Theogony" ever obtained this reverential acceptance among a people brought up on Homer may puzzle us when we come to read it, for it is the dullest of poems, containing, as has been said, "little more than a formal catalogue of names and pedigrees, relieved only by a few brief descriptive episodes." But the writer, or writers, who compiled it from temple-lore and popular tradition evidently stood in close relations with the priesthood of Delphi, the religious centre of the Hellenic world; and the sanction of Delphi, whose authority and influence may be compared to that of Rome in the Middle Ages, doubtless established the "Theogony" as a canonical work.

While the poetry of the Hesiodic school was thus deeply tinged with sacerdotalism, that of the Homeric, even when religious in subject, was distinguished by a secular tone and by a freedom of thought characteristic of the Ionian temperament. Despite the sublimity with which Homer invests the greater Olympians, his Gods are on the whole only stronger, more beautiful, and deathless men; there is no touch of mystery about them; nor is there in him a trace of the true religious awe that breathes from Aeschylus and Pindar, the great fourth-century representatives of the Delphic and Hesiodic tradition. And Homer's successors went still further in portraying the Gods as subject to like

passions with ourselves. There is extant a collection of thirty-four hexameter poems entitled "Hymns and Preludes of Homer and the Homeridae," mostly quite short and intended for use by rhapsodists, *i.e.* professional reciters of epic, who usually began by an invocation to some god. But there are five long hymns—those to the Delian and the Pythian Apollo, Demeter, Aphrodite, and Hermes—that each form a small epic, recounting the legend of the divinity. In these hymns, probably composed not later than the sixth century B.C., the Olympians are handled with as complete an absence of veneration as Shakespeare displays towards his Oberon and Titania; we seem, indeed, to be reading about powerful and capricious fairies rather than deities; and Hermes in particular, who is treated with a sort of affectionate disrespect, plays pranks worthy of Puck. The exception is the legend of Demeter, with its touches of human tenderness.

I have dwelt on these earliest extant monuments of Greek Poetical Mythology in order to show how it originated and developed as the work of two chief schools of poets. Two main streams of tradition were thus formed, often conflicting, because they represented two opposite elements in the Greek genius—those, namely, which Pater loved to contrast as the steadfast, sober Dorian and the mobile "flamboyant" Ionian. I do not, of course, mean to imply that the founders and followers of the Hesiodic tradition were Dorian by race; on the contrary, Hesiod himself was an immigrant to Boeotia from an Aeolic colony in Asia Minor;

Pindar, the devotee of Delphi, was a Theban; Aeschylus, who adheres so closely to the "Theogony" in his "Prometheus," an Athenian. But the poetry of all three exhibits certain ideals of life and conduct specially upheld in the Dorian states, and is permeated with that Delphic creed of which those states were the firmest supporters. It has also the conservatism and instinctive reverence for everything old and long-established characteristic of the Dorian temperament and foreign to the Ionian. Thus, while in Homer and the Homeric Hymns the Elder Gods, primeval Powers of Earth and Sky, are ignored in favour of the Olympians who superseded them, they are treated with honour by Hesiod, Pindar, and Aeschylus; and the last poet especially is at pains to represent the Olympian dynasty as legitimate heirs, rather than conquerors, of their predecessors.

Enough has perhaps been said to show why the above-mentioned sources — the "Theogony" of Hesiod, the Homeric Hymns, the Odes of Pindar, and the Dramas of Aeschylus—have been almost exclusively drawn upon in compiling the Myths of the Origins of the World, the Gods, and Mankind, and the Legends of the principal Olympian deities, which form the first volume of this work. The three subsequent volumes will deal with the immensely larger class of myths relating to the Heroes. The sources for these lie scattered over the whole of Greek literature, and to catalogue them in detail would be to write a mythological dictionary. For our purpose, it will be sufficient to indicate

briefly in notes to each volume the provenance of the myths it contains.

As regards the plan of the book, the myths relating to the Gods furnished an obvious first division; but for the rest it was not easy to decide on the best method of grouping so vast a mass of material. Arrangement by chronological order of the *sources* was, of course, not to be thought of, as it would invert the time-sequence of the subjects: the *Iliad*, for instance, which would stand first, contains the saga of heroes belonging to the close of the Heroic Age. Nor was chronological arrangement of the subject-matter practicable without continual repetitions and dislocations of the narrative. One might as well, indeed, attempt to narrate simultaneously the lives of contemporary kings of medieval England, Scotland, France, Aragon, Castile, and Hungary. For ancient Greece, except geographically speaking, was not one but many countries; each of which, petty canton though it might be, boasted its own god-descended line of hero-kings. And the story of every hero, even when, like that of Perseus, it is a fairy tale pure and simple, forms an integral part of the larger legend of his house, which again is intimately bound up with the traditions of a particular district or city. It seemed best, then, on the whole, to arrange our stories in six main groups, corresponding to six great homes of heroic saga—Northern Greece, Argos, Crete, Athens, Thebes, Troy—with certain supplementary divisions to be explained in due course.

This brings us to another question of classification. It may at first sight seem arbitrary to distinguish between "Myths of the Gods" and "Myths of the Heroes," considering how large a part the Gods play in the latter. But although it is sometimes difficult to draw the line with precision, there is a broad distinction between the two. The first class are myths in the strict (modern) sense of being purely fabulous; the second, which might be more properly termed legends, have a substratum of fact, however slight, and however much overlaid with miraculous incident. The contrast becomes clear when we compare, for instance, the birth and adventures of Dionysus with those of Heracles. Moreover, the centre of interest is radically different in the two classes. In the first, it is religious; the story illustrates some belief about the god or goddess concerned, and very often can be seen to have arisen in explanation of some feature of his or her worship. In the second, it is human; the protagonists are men and women, and the divine actors, if they do not merely appear *ex machinâ*, nevertheless fill rôles subordinate to that of the hero. Contrast, for an example, two famous and familiar stories about Apollo—his slaying the Python, and his sojourn with Admetus, husband of Alcestis.

Something may be said, in conclusion, about the manner in which the myths are here re-told. As far as possible that has been done by free translation; and when a complete version of a myth is to be found in a Greek poet, that version is repro-

duced as closely as may be. In these cases I have thought it worth while to give a reference to the original. But in the great majority of cases the story has had to be pieced together from several sources, to enumerate which would merely perplex the reader. Patchwork has been necessary for two reasons. *Firstly*, because such an immense proportion of Greek poetry is lost, and its mythological content only known to us through the quotations and meagre summaries of those enviable Alexandrian grammarians, scholiasts, and mythographers who had access to the whole literature. To speak of the tragedians alone: we have but seven out of the seventy plays of Aeschylus, seven out of seventy-five by Sophocles, eighteen out of a hundred and thirteen by Euripides; while the entire work of their not less prolific rivals survives only in fragments. There has been, undoubtedly, a survival of the fittest; but from the mythologist's point of view the loss is incalculable. What can be more tantalising than being obliged to reconstruct with the help of stray allusions and bald prose notices a myth known to have been the subject of a play by Aeschylus? *Secondly*, in the Lyric Poets, especially Pindar, and in the lyrical parts (*i.e.*, the choruses) of the dramas, we get either detached episodes from the legend of a god or hero — vignettes, as it were, exquisitely painted—or else, more rarely, a complete myth outlined in rapid, vivid touches; this is perhaps the most attractive part of our material, but for narrative purposes it has to be largely supplemented from other sources.

To sum up, whenever possible the poets have been allowed to speak for themselves; where reconstruction and dovetailing were requisite, I have endeavoured to do the work without "wresting the scriptures" and with the minimum of original invention.

PART I

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE TITANS

CHAPTER I

THE WORLD RULERS

"As Heaven and Earth are fairer, fairer far
Than Chaos and blank Darkness, though once chief;
And as we show beyond that Heaven and Earth
In form and shape compact and beautiful,
In will, in action free, companionship,
And thousand other signs of purer life;
So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,
A power more strong in beauty, born of us,
And fated to excel us. . . ."

Hyperion.

In the beginning was Chaos, that is to say, formless, boundless Void. And out of Chaos there arose two Beings, neither made nor created nor begotten; Gaia, the Earth, and Eros, or Love, who is fairest of gods and mightiest, unto whom all hearts be open, both of deities and mortal men. Now Earth brought forth from her bosom this world of ours and all that therein is; first she gave birth to Uranus, the Sky, to be a canopy over her and an eternal habitation for the gods; next appeared the Mountains and Hills, destined haunts of the Oread Nymphs and the wild Satyr folk, their playmates;

then, the wide waste of the Sea, bright with foamy billows. Thus our world began; and from her teeming womb the All-Mother clothed the hills and valleys thereof with every tree and green herb after its kind, and peopled it with tribes innumerable of beasts and birds, fishes and creeping things.

Meanwhile, primeval Chaos felt the throb and stir of the World-birth in his midst; emulous, he formed within himself as it were a Counter-World, even the vast Abyss of Tartarus, that lies as deep below the Earth as heaven's vault is high above her; there did Chaos beget his sole offspring—Night and her brother Erebus, the Nether Gloom. And Night became the mother of many children, but her firstborn were the twins, Light and Day.

Thus far, Earth had brought forth all things by her own life-giving power; but now did Eros, brooding over the fair, new world, kindle in her and in vast Uranus desire of mating; and from their union came at one birth three sons, portentous to behold. For they were huger than mountains; each had fifty heads upon his enormous shoulders and brandished a hundred terrific arms in air. Gyes, Cottus, and Briareus were the names of these brethren, whom the Greeks called also Hecatoncheires, that is, "Hundred-handed." And Earth gloried in the fierce might of her monstrous brood; but Uranus was sore affrighted at the view of them; for in uncouth glee they would toss to and fro a hill with all its pines as children toss a ball; and he thought, "What if they drag me down for pastime and rend me in pieces with those hands of theirs?"

So, ere they came to full growth, Uranus bore down on them with all his weight and thrust them from Earth into the dungeon-depths of Tartarus. Then Earth brought forth three other Giant sons, yet far less in stature than the Hundred-handed, and in form like unto men, save that each had but a single eye, round as a wheel, set in the midst of his forehead; from this they had their name of Cyclopes, that is, "Round-eyed." These also did Uranus cast into bottomless Tartarus, fearing not so much their strength as a certain secret art they practised. For the Cyclopes were the first smiths and workers in metal, and Earth had taught them how to forge thunderbolts and make lightning, when as yet there were no such things in the world.

Now Earth was wrath at heart for her imprisoned children's sake, and would fain have given no more offspring to Uranus; nevertheless he had his will of her, being lord over all by right of the strongest, until she had borne him yet six sons and as many daughters. These twelve are they who were called the Titans in the after time. Not theirs the stupendous bulk of the Hundred-handed, nor had they skill like the Cyclopes; but instead thereof, Earth had dowered their ample forms with beauty and majesty divine. For she said within herself, "Stern Uranus shall not fear these children, but love them; surely he cannot choose, beholding how fair and glorious they are." But Uranus, though he feared them not, envied the children for a beauty surpassing all his myriad starry eyes had

looked on; and he shut them from his view within their great Mother's breast. And she groaned, being burdened with the weight of those mighty gods, and quaked with throes as of travail while vainly they strove to burst their cavern prison. Long, long she brooded on revenge and found no way; at last she spoke with deep-murmuring voice to her Titan sons, "Which of you, O my sons, will avenge me on cruel Uranus, your oppressor and mine?"

"Gladly would we avenge you," answered the Titans, "but how can we strive with Uranus, seeing he is more of might than we by far?"

"Hearken," said their Mother, "for I have bethought me of a deed that shall bring his strength to nought, if ye will dare the same, and I have fashioned you a weapon withal. Behold this sharp sickle of adamant! Nightly, vast Uranus descends upon me and enfolds me in his loathed embrace; when next he comes, take you the sickle, and so smite him as he lies prone—that he may beget no more children to pine under his tyranny. Then will his strength depart from him, and he will rise up to his own place and abide there impotent, leaving with you the lordship of the world."

But all the Titans feared to do that deed, except Cronus, the youngest. He was the least among his brethren in bodily might and stature, but far excelled the rest in daring and subtlety; and forthwith he took an oath of them to own him for their king if he should deliver them out of durance. And the same night he did unto Uranus even as

Earth had bidden, and all came to pass as she had said. So Cronus sat on the throne of the firmament in his father's stead, ruling over all; but he gave his brethren dominion over the lands and waters and the lower regions of air. And to Oceanus, the eldest, whom he honoured above the rest, Cronus gave for an heritage the ever-rolling stream that girdles the round world; wherefore it is called Ocean unto this day.

Then the Titan brethren chose them wives among their sisters; and they were fruitful and multiplied, insomuch that time would fail to rehearse the whole divine progeny of Earth and Sky. Of some, indeed, the most ancient poets knew no more than the bare names, so early had their deity suffered overthrow and eclipse. Passing over such, we speak only of those primal Gods, Powers of Earth, Air, and Sea, whose fame lived on in song and story.

The offspring of Oceanus and his wife Tethys were as the sands of the sea for multitude. For their sons were the Rivers of all lands, among whom the firstborn was holy Nile; and their daughters the Ocean-Nymphs, besides all Nymphs that haunt fountain, lake, or stream, a countless host. Fair, kind, and gentle are all that sisterhood; friendly to mortals, they have an especial love of young children, to whom they are ministering spirits, fostering their growth by sweet and secret influences. One sister only, and she the eldest, was of different nature; her Fount rose in the chill gloom of a cavern deep underground; gods and men called her Styx, "The Loathly One," because her sunless,

ice-cold waters, unlike all others, were not life-giving but deadly.

Most glorious of the sons of Uranus was Hyperion, clothed in light as with a garment, whose countenance shone as the noonday; loveliest among goddesses was Theia, his sister and spouse. Hyperion builded him a cloud-palace, all rose and golden, on the verge of the Eastern sky; and in its glowing pavilions Theia brought forth her children—the Sun, the Moon, and the Dawn.

Crius, third of the Titan brethren, begot Astraeus, the Starry One. And Astraeus, by the rosy-fingered Dawn, became father of the Morning Star, and Hesperus, Star of Eve, and the Planets Seven. Also Dawn bore him the Four Winds, Eurus, Zephyrus, Notus, Boreas, that blow from East, West, South, and North.

While Earth and Air were thus filled with gods, others were begotten of the hoary Sea—a wondrous race whose home is in the waters, and two strange powers are theirs, for they can change their shape to what they will, and they know things that have been, and are, and are to come. Eldest and wisest of them all is the ancient Nereus, who dwells in the unfathomed coral caves with the fifty Sea-maidens, his daughters, to tend upon him. But Thaumas, his brother, is left lonely; for he had but one child, Iris the Rainbow; and soon as she was born, she rose on seven-hued aërial wings from her cradle of sparkling waves, and soared into the clouds of heaven, evermore to inhabit there.

The reign of Cronus was that blissful Golden Age

of which the antique poets loved to sing. In that far morning of the world, Heat and Cold were not yet at strife, nor had the Seasons begun their mystic, eternal dance; one clime, equable and mild, stretched from pole to pole. And the whole earth was a paradise, where sun and showers made a lasting Spring; where trees bore their fruit, and the vine her purple clusters all the year, and honey-dew dropped from the boughs of laurel and juniper, so bitter now; where flowers of every hue filled the air with perpetual fragrance. The tribes of living creatures as yet preyed not on each other, but fed alike on fruits and herbage; none was fierce, none hurtful among them; the lion gambolled with the kid, the unfanged serpent was guileless as the dove.

In this happy Garden appeared presently a new race—the First Men, whom the Titans made in their own image, out of the dust of the ground. To this race, as to their Age, bards gave the name of Golden, signifying their state of innocence and pure felicity. For they were holy, harmless, dwelling together in unity, reverencing the heavenly gods; and like gods they lived at ease, without labour, care, or sorrow, reaping in abundance the kindly fruits of the Earth. And they knew not sickness and pain, neither waxed old; but having lived in fulness of vigour seven lifetimes of latter men, they fell peacefully into the unawakening sleep. And when their bodies returned to the earth whence they were taken, their spirits became the Good Daemons, inhabitants of middle air, who

watch evermore over the righteous, and bless their flocks and fields with increase. Now the Golden Race left no children to come after them; for the gods had not yet made Woman to be the bane of Man; and well it was that the sinless folk passed away ere yet, through the strife of mighty opposites, change and decay entered into the world.

While all things else had peace under the sway of Cronus, there was no peace in his own cunning heart, but an abiding fear; for always he remembered the curse wherewith Uranus had cursed the son who maimed him, and how he prophesied that Cronus in turn should suffer overthrow at the hands of his own children. And being resolved to defeat that prophecy, he swallowed alive each child his wife Rhea brought forth, as soon as it was born. When Rhea had thus lost five babes and knew herself about to bear yet another, she made her prayer to her ancient sire, imploring counsel and aid. But a faint, vast murmur thrilled through the sky. "*My voice is but the voice of winds and tides, no more than winds and tides can I avail. Pray thou to thy puissant Mother: in me, dispossessed of godhead, is no succour more.*" So the Titaness betook her to Earth, and the mighty Mother gave her counsel how to outwit grim Cronus. And when Rhea's full time came that she should be delivered, she hid herself from him in a cave of the Mount named Ida, in the great Island of Crete. There she brought forth a son, a mighty babe, and called his name Zeus, and gave him to the Nymphs of the

mountain, to be reared in secret. Then took she a large smooth stone of the hillside, and wrapped it in swaddling bands, and brought it to Cronus, saying, "Behold, I have borne my lord another son." Nought said he, but snatched the stone and greedily swallowed it, nothing doubting that it was the newborn child. Thus his wife deceived him, for all his cunning.

Rhea durst not visit her babe, lest Cronus should mark her comings and goings from his watch-tower in the sky; but well he throve, tended by the gentle Nymphs, and nourished on the milk of a mountain goat. And for guardians he had the fierce Curetes, Earth-born warriors, who made him sport with their wild war-dances, leaping and prancing in full armour with deafening din of shouts and clashing weapons; and so did they whenever the infant cried, lest Cronus should overhear him.

So the child Zeus increased daily in beauty and stature, nor was it long before he gave proof of his godhead in wondrous wise. Two years his foster-mother suckled him; snow-white she was, with jet-black horns and hooves, the most beauteous of her kind, and her name was Amalthea. Then, on a day, while the young god played with her after his wont, he grasped one of her curved horns as she made pretence of butting, and broke it clean off. Tears stood in the creature's eyes, and she looked reproachfully on her fosterling. But the little god ran to her and threw his arms about her shaggy neck, bidding her be comforted, for he would make amends; with that he laid his right

hand on the goat's head, and immediately a new horn sprouted forth full-grown. And he took up the horn he had broken, and gave it to the Nymphs, saying, " Kindly nurses, in recompense of your care, Zeus gives you Amalthea's Horn, which shall be to you a Horn of Plenty. As for her, when I come into my kingdom, I will be mindful of my foster-mother; she shall not die, but be changed into one of the bright signs of Heaven." Thus Zeus promised, and fulfilled his word in the aftertime, for faithful and true are the promises of the Immortals. But when the Nymphs had taken the Horn of Amalthea, behold they found it brimful of all manner of luscious fruits, of the finest wheat flour, and sweet butter, and golden honeycombs. They shook all out, laughing in delight, and one cried, " Here were a feast for the gods, had we but wine thereto! " No sooner said she this than the Horn bubbled over with ruby wine; for this was the magic in it, that it never grew empty, and yielded its possessors whatsoever food or drink they desired.

Now when Earth saw that Zeus was come to the prime of his mighty youth, she sent to him one of the daughters of Oceanus named Metis, which is being interpreted " Counsel." And Metis came and stood before him in the Idaean Mount and said, " I have an errand unto thee, O king that shalt be hereafter."

And Zeus said, " Is it a foe's errand, or a friend's? Who sent thee hither, and who art thou? "

And she said, " Metis is my name, a daughter of Oceanus the old, and my errand is from Earth the

All-Mother. She bids thee take this herb I bring and go straightway to Cronus in his golden house on high; tell him not who or whence thou art, but cause him to swallow the herb unweeting, and it shall work mischief to him and good to thee. Delay not, for the hour is at hand when Cronus must pay full measure for the outrage he did his sire, as it is ordained."

"Tell me," said Zeus, "how knows Earth that such an hour is at hand, and by whom is the vengeance ordained?"

Metis answered, "There are Three Sisters, daughters of primeval Night, Grey Virgins, older than Time, who sit for ever in the shades of underground, spinning threads of divers colours from their golden distaffs; and the threads are the lives of gods and men. As the sisters twine them, sad-hued or bright, so is the lot of each living soul, mortal or immortal; there is none among the gods, nor shall be, that may escape the lot spun for him, nor avail to turn those spinners from their task. Hasting not, resting not, without knowledge, without pity, the Three Fates work on. But as they twirl the spindles, they sing the Song of the Morrow; and Earth, she only, understands that song; hence it is she knows what is coming upon Cronus."

Then Zeus arose and went up to the heavenly palace-halls; there he found Cronus feasting, and quaffing honey-coloured nectar, wine of the gods. Cronus asked him who he was, and Zeus answered, "I am Prometheus, son of Iapetus thy brother, who greets thee well by me." Then Cronus bade

him welcome, and they drank and caroused together. But when they had well drunk, Zeus put the herb of Earth into his father's cup, unmarked of him. And Cronus no sooner swallowed it than a marvel past thought befell; for he disgorged from his giant maw, first the stone Rhea gave him, and then her two sons and daughters three, no longer babes but full-grown. Forthwith Zeus made himself known to his brethren, and the young gods seized their father and bound him in chains. But ancient Cronus cried for aid to his Titan kindred, with a voice like the tempest's roar; and they came swiftly in their might; and the young gods could not stand before them, but fled out of heaven to the cloudy top of Mount Olympus, that great peak robed in eternal snows. There they abode as in a citadel, and thence it is that Zeus and the family of Zeus are called the Olympians to this day. But Rhea, foreseeing deadly strife to come, withdrew herself to the pine-clad hills of Phrygia, where in after days the wild hill-folk worshipped with strange rites the august Mother of the Gods, whom they called in their tongue Cybele.

And now there was war in heaven; for ten years' space the Elder Gods fought against the Olympians and neither side could win the mastery. But one among the Titans would not fight against Zeus; for being endued with wisdom and foresight above all gods, he perceived that the day of Cronus must shortly have an end and his sceptre pass to another. This was Prometheus, whom Asia, daughter of Oceanus, bore to Iapetus, son of Earth. Fain

would he have dissuaded his father and his brothers from taking arms in a lost cause, and for the sake of one who, himself a usurper, must now reap as he had sown; but they would not heed, trusting in their own giant strength.

At last, Zeus sought counsel of Mother Earth, and she spake this oracle unto him out of the cave that is in rocky Pytho—"*He that will conquer in this strife, let him set free the captives in Tartarus.*" For Earth had long borne Cronus a grudge, because he would not release the Hundred-handed and the Cyclopes from that abyss of darkness; therefore she willingly revealed to Zeus the secret of victory. But nought knew he of those giants or their fate, nor so much as the name of Tartarus, which none among the heaven-dwelling gods will utter for very loathing; so the saying of Earth was dark to him and he was much disheartened. Then Prometheus, knowing what had befallen, came to Zeus on Olympus and said, "Son of Cronus, though fight I may not against my kin, fight against thee I will not, for that were idle folly, seeing the Fates will have thee Lord of all. Let there be peace between me and thee, and I will interpret the oracle Earth has given thee."

And Zeus heard him gladly, and said, "For this good turn, count me thy debtor and fast friend evermore." Then straightway they two fared through the Underworld to the gates of unplumbed Tartarus, where by the Titan's aid Zeus slew the snake Campé, their grisly warden, and delivered the captives. And he carried the Cyclopes back to upper air; but he made the Hundred-handed

swear an oath to dwell thenceforth in the uttermost parts of ocean, lest monsters so fell should work havoc upon earth.

Now the Cyclopes made them a smithy in the flaming heart of Sicilian Etna; and there they wrought gifts for Zeus their deliverer and for his brothers. To Poseidon, the eldest, they gave a Trident with prongs of adamant; to Hades, the second, they gave a Cap of Darkness, which whoso put on walked invisible to gods and men; but for Zeus himself they forged the all-dreaded thunderbolts and the scorching shafts of lightning. Thus armed, the three Olympians assaulted yet again the ramparts of the sky. And the Titans, for all their colossal might, could not stand before the Trident of Poseidon and the more awful weapons of Zeus, unknown as yet in the armoury of Heaven; thunder-smitten, lightning-seared, they reeled and fell sheer from the crystal battlements, hurtling to earth like ruined stars. The Olympians pursued after them, riding upon the wings of the wind; and such as they overtook they cast bound into abysmal Tartarus, under ward of the Hundred-handed. But Cronus with certain others escaped to the fastnesses of Mount Othrys in Northern Greece; there they held out for a season, sheltering from the thunderbolts in dens and caves. Then came to the Olympians two mighty Shapes, a male and a female, more like each to each than any twins ever seen; and a third followed them, resplendent, in form a goddess, from whose shoulders waved feathered wings, great as an eagle's. Zeus

asked them who they were, and the Twin Shapes answered, "We are Power and Might, come with Victory our sister to be your servants henceforth. Lead us now against your enemies, and she will follow as her wont is." So Zeus went forth with those new servants to battle, and prevailed; and the remnant of the Titans fled Westward over land and sea to the misty plains of Ocean, beyond Earth's utmost bounds. But huge Atlas, brother of Prometheus, was overtaken in flight; and for him Zeus ordained dread penance, even that he should stand for ever at the western verge of Earth, a living pillar, bearing on his shoulders the weight of the massy firmament.

And now Zeus took his seat upon the throne of heaven and called his brothers and sisters before him that he might divide unto them the regions of the world, with all the principalities, powers, and honours of the Elder Gods. First, he reserved to himself as supreme the lordship of the Sky and all the bright realms of Air; next, he granted strong Poseidon dominion over the Sea and all Rivers, Lakes, and Springs; and Hades he made King of the Underworld and all that dwell therein. Hades was ill-pleased that he was given that lampless, unpeopled realm; then said Zeus, "Be content, my brother; for in time coming thou shalt have folk enow to rule over, yea, a multitude that no man can number, seeing all flesh shall come to thee at last. Moreover, in thy keeping are all the hidden riches of Earth, so that thy name shall be called

Pluto, the Wealthy One." Then Hades was well content, and departed to his kingdom, no more to be seen among heaven-dwelling gods. But immediately there came one before the throne in likeness of a stately woman, black-stoled, black-veiled, bearing on her head a pitcher of water, and she cried aloud to Zeus, saying, "Grant me a boon, son of Cronus, for I, even I, have done thee greater service than any besides."

"Who art thou," said Zeus, "and what is thy request?"

Then said she, "I am Styx, eldest of the daughters of Oceanus, Lady of the Loathly Fount, that rises in the Underworld. Suffer not Hades, I pray, to rob me of mine heritage and renown; for it was I who sent my children, Power, Might, and Victory, to be thy servants."

And Zeus made answer, "Goddess, since thou hast been my helper, Hades shall not dispossess thee of thine ancient right; and as for thine honour and renown, I will add thereto. Henceforth thy children shall stand ever on my right hand when I sit upon the throne of my majesty and whensoever I go forth they shall attend me. Moreover, I will make the Water of Styx a solemn oath, of power to bind all the immortal gods; the mightiest shall not dare to take that name in vain."

Next appeared before Zeus the radiant Powers of the Air, and them likewise he established in their ancient offices, bidding Sun, Moon, and Stars fulfil their courses as of old. But Iris the Rainbow he appointed to be his Messenger to dwellers upon Earth.

Last of all stood forth the daughters of Cronus, Hestia, Demeter, Hera, beautiful beyond compare in their maiden bloom; and Zeus said to them, "Fair sisters mine, I will give each of you some pleasant land of Earth, to be your dower and marriage portion."

Then answered Hestia, eldest of the three, "Brother and King, I desire no dower, being utterly purposed to keep my virginity for ever. Grant me instead to tend the sacred Hearthfire in this my father's House, after the manner of home-keeping maidens."

"Be it so, Hestia," answered Zeus, "but we will not leave thee portionless among Immortals. Henceforth thou art Lady of the Hearthfire wherever its hallowed flame shall rise, both in the Home of the Gods and hereafter in the dwellings of men. And since thou hast chosen no land of Earth to set thy name there, I give thee instead honour and worship in every city; behold, whensoever men gather together for feasts or sacrifice the first and the last oblation shall be offered to Hestia."

Now when the new Lord of the Sky had apportioned the world among the Immortals, he bethought him of taking a wife; and he went to inquire of Mother Earth which of the goddesses was meetest to share his throne. Earth answered, "I have two daughters by ancient Uranus that are yet unwedded. I will send the elder unto thee, for she is wise with all my wisdom, and by her counsels thy throne shall be established in righteousness." So when Zeus had returned to his golden

house, his Bride came to him, led by the Fates themselves up the Shining Stair, that men call the Milky Way, from her girlhood's home on the far shores of Ocean. Themis, which means "Law," was the name of this daughter of Earth, revered of gods and men as Guardian of the eternal laws of righteousness. By her kings rule and senators are wise in counsel, for state-upholding Wisdom is founded on Justice. Of Themis also comes the sweet, steadfast Order wherein the whole creation moves, from the stars in their courses to the humblest flower that blows. For she bore to Zeus the Three Seasons, Goddesses ever faithful, ever fair, who lead through earth and skies the slow pomp of the circling Year, while to the rhythm of their rosy, dancing feet all things wax and wane. Theirs it is, also, to bar and unbar the everlasting doors of Heaven's King. Thus came Spring, Summer, and Winter into the world.

After this, it chanced that Zeus wandered on earth one day, delighting himself in its pleasant places, and came to the fruitful uplands of Pieria, hard by lofty Olympus. There dwelt in bowery solitudes the youngest child of Earth and Sky, dark-browed Mnemosyne, whose name is Memory in our tongue. Zeus looked on the maiden where she sat, lost in dreams, beneath the shade of oaken boughs, her eyes fixed on the mirror of a clear, still pool; and desire burned within him, so fair she was. Brief is the wooing when a god plays the lover; the self-same day saw those two made one in such bliss as Immortals know; and for nine nights thereafter

Zeus lingered in Mnemosyne's secret bower, forgetful of his heaven. But when the ninth moon had risen full-orbed, she bore at a birth the divine Ladies of Song whom men call the Muses. And behold, as soon as they were born these daughters of Zeus become maidens grown, and began to sing a ravishing strain. Forth then they fared, a lovely company, up the steeps of Olympus, joying in their full-throated melody; Earth heard, and lifted up her mighty voice for gladness, and Olympus thrilled to the soft thud of their feet as they danced along. Ninefold is that sister-choir, and their names are nine sweet symphonies; Clio, Euterpe, Thalia, Melpomene, Terpsichore, Erato, Polymnia, Urania, Calliope. When they came to the mountain-top, wreathed in clouds, untrod of mortals, they spread their white arms upon the air, and soared like a bevy of singing swans to the threshold of their Father's courts. And when they were come before his throne, they sang the praises of Zeus, his mighty acts and excellent greatness, with voices so honey-sweet that the glorious conclave of the Immortals sat spell-bound by the appeasing, gracious harmony. From that day, never do the heaven-dwelling gods gather at the banquet but the Muses, high-enthroned, share the ambrosial feast; and when the cups of all are crowned with nectar, they rise up singing together songs older than Time, yet ever new.

"Whose praise do they mention?
Of what is it told—
What will be for ever;
What was from of old.

First hymn they the Father
Of all things; and then
The rest of immortals,
The action of men.

The day in his hotness;
The strife with the palm;
The night in her silence,
The stars in their calm."

CHAPTER II

THE MAKING OF MAN

"And Jove now reigned; for on the race of man
First famine, and then toil, and then disease,
Strife, wounds, and ghastly death unseen before,
Fell; and the unseasonable seasons drove
With alternating shafts of frost and fire,
Their shelterless, pale tribes to mountain caves . . .
Prometheus saw, and waked the legioned hopes
Which sleep within folded Elysian flowers,
Nepenthe, Moly, Amaranth, fadeless blooms,
That they might hide with thin and rainbow wings
The shape of Death; and Love he sent to bind
The disunited tendrils of that vine
Which bears the wine of life, the human heart;
And he tamed Fire. . . ."

Prometheus Unbound.

WHEN Zeus was established on the throne of his kingdom, his chosen counsellor and familiar friend was Prometheus, by whose wisdom and foreknowledge he had triumphed over the Titans. But in process of time a bitter feud arose between those mighty ones; and the cause was neither a god nor a goddess, but the frail race of man. Whereat let none marvel overmuch, as though such cause were all too slight and negligible to breed hatred in immortal breasts. For one is the race of gods and the race of men, and they come of one Mother, even Earth; albeit between godhead and manhood there is a great gulf fixed,

seeing Man walketh a shadow among shadows, but for the gods the brazen heaven standeth fast, an eternal home. Nevertheless, some similitude we bear to the Immortals, alike in bodily form and in the sovran reasoning mind—even we, that know not, when morning breaks, the way wherein Destiny shall lead us before the sun go down. So it was that Prometheus, a deathless god, thought no scorn to avow himself the friend and partisan of hapless mortals—nay, to brave for their sakes the wrath of Zeus omnipotent.

We have told already how, in the reign of Cronus, the primal race of mankind, surnamed the Golden, lived and passed away. Cronus had been well pleased with that innocent and pious folk; for they had builded altars in groves and high places, and made oblation of first-fruits thereon to the God who watered the earth from above with life-giving rain, making his clouds drop fatness on tilth and pasture. So when these were gone the way of all flesh, Cronus bade the All-Mother bring forth a second race of men, that they might likewise worship him. And Earth did so, but they were of far different nature from the first, because the Golden Age was now drawing to its close, and change and decay were stealing upon the world. For by a Law that is from everlasting, whatever comes into being must grow up to maturity after its kind, but when it has reached its appointed perfection must dwindle and decline. So Earth herself, and mankind with her, has passed from a Golden prime through three other Ages, each worse than the last,

which ancient poets called the Silver, the Bronze, and the Iron.

Now the second, or Silver Race of men, were born strong and beautiful like the first, and it seemed their lifetime was to be the same, for their childhood lasted a hundred years. For that space they lived happy in the pleasant garden that our world still was, fleeting the time carelessly in childish sports and merriment. But meanwhile the reign of Cronus ended, and with the shock of his downfall set in the universal decline of things. And the Silver Race no sooner came to manhood than they began to do evil exceedingly in the sight of Zeus, through the blind folly of their hearts; they were full of pride, cruelty, and wrath, hating one another, oppressing one another; every man's hand was against his fellow, and there was no fear of the gods before their eyes. So their days were few and full of ills; for Zeus plagued them with sore plagues until he had destroyed them, because of their lawless violence one to another, and because they would not honour the heaven-dwelling gods, givers of all blessings, with sacrifice and holy rites, but set them utterly at nought. So perished that sinful race, and their spirits passed into the dark House of Hades. For Zeus suffered them not to inhabit upper air, like the holy souls of their forerunners; yet have they a place and power among the Nether Gods; and being mighty for good and evil, were worshipped in the aftertime by the name of "*The Blessed Ones Below.*"

After this, Zeus was fain to have a new race of

mortals created, that he and the rest of the Olympians might not lack the praises and sacrifices they loved; but Earth would no longer bring forth living creatures, for her great bearing-time was past already. Then Prometheus took red clay from the banks of a river that is in Arcadia, and tempered it with water of the river, and with that he made men for Zeus, breathing into them the breath of life. And this third race were known as the Bronze Men in after ages, not only because they were worse and weaker than the Silver Race, but because they first of mortals learned to fashion tools and weapons of bronze, instead of bone or flint, as shall presently be told.

Now Prometheus made these men full-grown, but at first they were witless as children, not knowing how to build themselves houses, or weave clothing for their bodies, or till the ground for food, or any art that ministers to life. The Golden and the Silver Races had known none of these things; but they needed them not, since in their time Earth had perpetual Summer and yielded of herself more abundant increase than now the husbandman can win from her by toil. But now the Bronze Men came into a changed world—a wilderness, not a garden; where already cold and hunger and disease had entered, and where beasts and birds had began to prey on one another through lack of provender in winter-time. And at first they lived like the beasts around them, housing in caves and burrows, and feeding on roots and acorns or the raw flesh of such animals as they could kill.

Prometheus saw their wretchedness, and it moved him to compassion. He spoke thereof to the Olympians, but they smiled, lying beside their nectar; and Zeus said, "What is that to us, wise son of Iapetus? See thou to it, if such care thou hast for creatures of a day. As for me, I reck not how they fare so long as they worship the Thunderer with the honour due unto his name; seeing for my pleasure they are and were created." Then the Titan left him and went his way to earth; from that day forward he made his abode with men, and began to teach them those manifold arts whereby alone they have risen from depths of want and savagery to be the roof and crown of things.

First of all he taught them the use of Fire. By aid of that wondrous servant, they were enabled to keep off the winter cold, to dress their food, to bake rude vessels of clay; and, above all, to work in metals. For Prometheus showed them how to melt tin and copper together in the furnace, and so make bronze; and of bronze they wrought weapons for war and the chase, armour for defence, and tools for all handicraft. Even their houses, as they grew wealthier, were plated with bronze over timber; and so were the temples they builded for the gods, some of which were yet to be seen in Greece ages after the Bronze Folk had passed away. Next, they learned of the Titan to yoke the Ox to the plough and make the Ass a bearer of burdens, that their own toils might be the lighter; then, to subdue the Horse with bit and bridle, that splendid chariot-teams might enhance the pomp of kings

and nobles. And then he taught them to build and sail the First Ship, that they might fly over the trackless deep on woven wings.

But besides such arts as these, Prometheus bestowed on men the lore whereby they have ever since shaped their course through life, as a mariner steers by his chart. He it was who taught them to reckon the year and discern the comings of seed-time, harvest, and winter by observing the rising and setting of the stars; he, also, who invented Numbers, supreme of sciences, and Letters, Memory's instruments, that form the written word and are as foundations to the House of Poesy. And because he saw men ravaged by fell diseases, he gave them knowledge of sure antidotes for each, whether salves or potions, and of all healing herbs that Earth brings forth for her ailing children's sake.

Lastly, he revealed to them the whole art of divination; as well by dreams, signs, and omens, as by the flight of birds and the appearance of the entrails of the victim offered on the altar and the burning of the altar-flame; that they might no longer walk blindly amid besetting dangers, but circumspectly, foreseeing things to come. In a word, then, whatsoever art is known to mortals, Prometheus was the father of it.

Now Zeus was ill-pleased when he saw the race of men coming to such prosperity; for he thought that the better they fared through their new-found knowledge and skill, the less they would lean on the gods for succour and seek to propitiate them with sacrifices. And he called Prometheus to him

and said, "What is this I see done on earth, O Titan, and why art thou so zealous on behalf of miserable men, that are even as the beasts that perish?"

Prometheus answered, "Because they have no helper among the Olympians, and because they also are offspring of Earth, my Mother, being formed of her substance. Wherefore men no less than gods have their appointed places and rights in this realm of thine; yet when thou madest division of principalities, powers, and honours among the Immortals, thou gavest nothing unto mankind, but they were left aliens and outlaws from the commonwealth of the world. Nay, forthwith thou wouldst have blotted out the Silver Race from the land of the living, because they had been subject unto Cronus, had not I hardly prevailed with thee to spare them. But when by their iniquities they had provoked thee to destroy them untimely, didst thou not desire of me to make in their stead the men that now are, lest thou shouldst lack worshippers and thine altars be cold for ever? Bethink thee, then, King of all, that these are thy people and the sheep of thy pasture. If the kings of the earth are shepherds to their folk, how much more art thou, in whose name and by whose authority they wield their petty sceptres? And though the king be supreme, yet hath the commonalty its rights established by law and custom, which if the ruler maintain not, he is no true king, but a tyrant. Now, therefore, son of Cronus, hear my counsel; grant to men some privilege they may call their

own henceforward, and honour thee the more because thou hadst respect unto them."

To whom replied the King of gods, dissembling wrath: "Prometheus, cunning-witted art thou from of old, and skilled above all gods to weave subtle words. But now, since thou takest upon thee to teach Zeus wisdom, let us prove one another in the sight of gods and men, that all may know which is the wiser, I or thou. Thou wouldst have me grant, forsooth, rights and privileges to base mortals, even as I did to each of the everliving gods? Content thee, then, for I will give them nothing less than a share in the honours belonging to me and mine—even right to a portion of the sacrifices which heretofore have been burnt whole upon our altars. Go to now, call these men of thine together to my altar in Sicyon, vale of cucumbers; thither will I bring the Olympians all; and we will see whether thou hast craft enough to outwit Zeus and gain the better portion for men. For thou shalt slay a fat bullock for a burnt-offering, as the manner is, and divide it into two portions, and I will choose the one that liketh me best; this shall be the god's portion ever after, and the other men shall keep of right. But if thou canst beguile me into choosing the worser share, then, and not till then, boast thyself the wiser of us twain."

So gods and men were gathered together in Sicyon, vale of cucumbers, and Prometheus slew the bullock before them all, and having flayed it, divided it in pieces. And Zeus watched well to see what he did next; nevertheless, his eyes played him false, for

the Titan deceived him by sleight of hand. Quick as thought, he stripped the flesh from the bones, and crammed it into the paunch of the ox, with the heart and succulent liver; and he set the paunch and reeking hide apart by themselves. But he heaped together the stripped bones and the entrails, and covered them with the rich fat of the beast, a goodly sight; and he said to Zeus, "Choose now, O Thunderer, which of these two portions shall be thine." Now when Zeus saw that one portion was far the larger, and the enticing fat was spread thereon, while the other was nought but the paunch and hide, he laughed and said, "Of a truth, Prometheus, thou hast made the two shares wondrous unequal. But so much the better for the chooser, seeing a very simpleton might know which to take." So saying, he stretched forth his hands eagerly upon the glistening fat, and took it—and behold, where he thought to see the fleshy carcass beneath, there was only a heap of bare bones! Rage swelled his mighty heart at the affront put upon him in the sight of gods and men; yet he feigned to take it in good part, as a well-played jest, and said to the Titan, "Aha, friend Prometheus, so thou hast not yet, it seems, forgotten thy trickeries of old." And with that he departed to his house on high. Now, this is why mortal men, from that day to this, have not burned whole victims on the altars of sacrifice, but the bones wrapped in fat, keeping the flesh for themselves.

Shortly after this, mankind were brought yet again into miserable plight; for Zeus in revengeful

mood took away Fire from earth. It is a law to all the Immortals that they may not recall a gift, so he could not deprive men of their new-won privilege; but by hiding the seeds of flame he made it of no profit to them. And he said in his heart, "The cunning Titan shall learn that Zeus is his match in craftiness, for all he has robbed me of my dues by jugglery, to enrich his favourites. Now let them keep the best portion of the sacrifice, for small good will they get of it, lacking fire to dress savoury meats withal." But the loss of such fare was the least part of the evil Zeus thus wrought; all life-fostering arts must have perished, and men had been mere savages to the end, without the use of fire. That Prometheus knew well; and he pleaded with Zeus to restore it; but he, nursing wrath unappeasable, proclaimed in full synod of the Olympians that the pure element of fire should henceforth be confined to the Hearth of the heaven-dwellers, and threatened with his vengeance whoso should dare take one spark thereof to earth. And at that Prometheus left him, and went away sorrowful, knowing the things that he must do and suffer, for the sake of helpless man.

Not many days after, Zeus looked forth from his heaven and lo!—the blue-grey wreaths of smoke were curling skyward once more from the hearths of men. For Prometheus had taken fire by stealth from the Hearth of the gods, and brought it back to earth in a hollow wand of giant fennel. Herein the Titan manifested to the uttermost his love towards mortals, seeing he foreknew at how great

a price he must regain for them that inestimable benefit. And now fierce indignation possessed the mind of Zeus; the ancient kindness of Prometheus was forgotten, and, had it been possible, he would instantly have destroyed with his thunderbolts the rebel who had defied his sovereign edict. But since his foeman was immortal, Zeus resolved to doom him to eternal torments; moreover, though he could not again deprive men of fire—for what a god has given, no other god, however mighty, can take away—he devised for them an evil gift that should countervail the good gift of Prometheus. Forthwith he sent his dread ministers, Kratos and Bia, to seize the Titan and lead him bound to the frozen wastes of Scythia; and the captive went unresisting to the place of punishment, foreseeing with unshaken mind what must betide him there. Which things you shall hear of anon; but now we take leave of Prometheus for a while, and tell of the gift Zeus sent to mankind, with intent to afflict him the more.

This gift was the First Woman. For Prometheus created menfolk only, and happy had it been for them if they had never set eyes on womankind, those shiftless, thriftless devourers of men's substance, who are to homesteads what lurdane drones are to the hive. So deemed, and rightly, the wisest of ancient bards and sages.

When Zeus had devised in his deep mind the nature and form of this new creature, he called to him Hephaestus, the Artificer-God, and bade him mould an image out of clay, like in face and form

to the immortal goddesses. Then Zeus commanded his daughter Pallas Athena to array the image with a silver robe and veil of her own weaving; and wily Hermes, his Messenger, to put within it a spirit unabashed and a deceitful heart. So the image came to life; and the first act of the new-made Woman was to draw the long, shining veil around her with both hands, disposing it in graceful folds. Like to a fair, modest bride she seemed as Zeus led her into the circle of the Olympians; and they marvelled all, beholding her beauty, and hearing his deep design in creating such a mate for man. And to pleasure him, they all bestowed gifts on the Woman; Aphrodite shed her own soft alluring charms about her; the Graces adorned her with a golden necklace; the Three Seasons with chaplets of their sweetest flowers; Hephaestus brought her a diadem, a miracle of his craft, whereon panthers and lions ramped in gold, like things of life. And roguish Hermes gave her the art of feigning, and a coaxing tongue withal. But the gift of Zeus was a great Jar of earthenware, such as men use for storing corn, oil, or wine; and the lid of the Jar was sealed down. Therefore did the Olympians name the Woman Pandora—"All-gifted," because they had all helped to dower her.

Now Prometheus had a younger brother called Epimetheus, who by his wise counselling had taken no part in the Titans' warfare with the Olympians, but abode peacefully in Arcadia, where Zeus suffered him to keep his inheritance unmolested. Nor would Prometheus draw his brother into his

own quarrel; only he warned him not to trust to the friendship of Zeus, and, above all, never to accept any gift at his hands. But the names of these two brothers expressed their opposite natures, for "Prometheus" means *Forethought*, and "Epimetheus," *Afterthought;* and while the elder took thought for the morrow, the younger was only wise after the event. He was, indeed, the spiritual father of all such as are earnest to lock the stable door when the horse has been stolen. And so, when Hermes came to him, leading Pandora by the hand, and told him that the King of gods had sent him a wife from the heavenly halls in token of amity and goodwill, Epimetheus thought of nothing but her loveliness and his own good luck, and joyfully received her into his house. Pandora carried in her arms the Jar that Zeus had given her; and when Epimetheus asked her what it was, she answered, "The King in the sky gave it me, saying it was the dowry I should bring my husband, but what it holds I know not." "We will see that to-morrow," quoth Epimetheus, "but now set it down here by my hearth, and let us eat and drink together and be merry, for this is our wedding-day."

But when the morrow came, Epimetheus remembered his brother's warning, and it repented him that he had taken a bride and her dowry at the hand of Zeus. Howbeit, he saw that he could not undo what was done, nor had he any mind to part from beautiful Pandora. "Wife," he said to her, "it comes in my mind that Zeus gave you that Jar with no good intent, seeing he is at heart

an illwisher to me and mine; I charge you, therefore, never to open it; for while it stands fast shut, whatever may be therein can do us no harm." And the First Woman promised obedience; but being woman, she was no sooner forbidden to open the Jar than she burned to know what might be therein; she waited only until her husband was gone forth, then broke the seal and lifted the lid. Forthwith, out flew a cloud of black-winged sprites, even all Cares and Woes and dire Diseases that infest mankind; and they floated away like smoke through door and windows, or ever Pandora could draw breath to cry out. Too late, she closed the lid again; the Jar was already empty save for one faëry shape, clinging beneath its rim—and that was Hope. For while Prometheus was yet the friend of Zeus, he had set two Jars on the starry threshold of his court—one golden, one of clay; and the golden he filled with all blessings and good things that are, but the other with all things evil, that Zeus might dispense both at his pleasure. But along with the evils, Prometheus shut Hope into the Jar of clay; because he knew Hope alone would keep men from ending their wretched lives, when Zeus in his wrath should cause all those plagues and afflictions to be let loose upon them.

This was how the First Woman came into the world, and such was the dower she brought with her.

CHAPTER III

PROMETHEUS BOUND

" Evil minds
Change good to their own nature. I gave all
He has; and in return he chains me here."
Prometheus Unbound.

FAR away on the frozen Scythian steppes lies a deep ravine, walled about with black and jagged cliffs, rock-paven, waterless, a valley of desolation and of the shadow of death. To this dreadful prison-house Kratos and Bia led Prometheus in chains, and Hephaestus followed with lagging steps and downbent head, loathing the task he was come to fulfil by command of Zeus. But those twin-born Giants, who know not ruth any more than do winds and waves, exulted in their errand; with looks of grim glee, they hurried their captive to where a huge, pillar-shaped rock jutted from the face of a towering precipice, and impatiently bade the lame Smith-god do his office.

Then said he to Prometheus, " O deep-devising Son of Earth, as loth am I to do, as thou to suffer, the thing that yet must be done. Behold, with these strong-forged shackles I must rivet thy limbs to yonder rock, prisoning thee where never more thou mayest have sight or speech of man, but withering under the sun's hot eye, wilt long for the approach of starry-kirtled Night—and, sleepless

through the dark hours, hail not less gladly the Sun's return, to melt from thee the biting hoar-frost. But night or day, the same weight of 'scapeless, wasting torment shall wear thee down eternally; for there is none in all the world that shall avail to set thee free. Such guerdon hast thou for thy love toward mortals; alas, why didst thou, a god, contemn the wrath of gods to win mankind prerogatives not theirs by right? For now not all thy groans and lamentations shall soften the inexorable soul of Zeus. Flinty-hearted ever is he that rules a new-conquered realm!"

More he had said, but Kratos broke in fiercely, "Truce to thy bootless plaints, Hephaestus! Why standest thou there idle? Wherefore pity one utterly hateful to all the gods—ay, one that has robbed *thee* in especial, seeing thou art Lord of Fire?"

"How should I *not* pity him," replied Hephaestus, "who am his kinsman and have been his associate? But what knowest thou of compassion, savage that thou art? Now, curses be on my craftsmanship, for his sake."

"And wherefore so?" asked the other, sneeringly, "'Tis not thy famous skill, I trow, that hath brought the Fire-stealer to this pass."

"Would with all my heart another had it, and not I," exclaimed the Smith-god, bitterly.

"Ah, but thou canst not choose," retorted Kratos; "all must bear whatever burden the Fates impose—none but supreme Zeus is free."

"What need to tell me that?" said Hephaestus, "I know it too well to gainsay thee."

"To work, then," answered Kratos, "and quickly, thou wert best, lest Zeus mark how slack thou art to perform his bidding."

Thereupon the twin Giants held up the Titan's arms above his head, while Hephaestus riveted shackles of massy steel about his neck and arms and ankles, and clamped them to the pillar with bolts of adamant. Kratos the while watched narrowly, gloating over the sight, and ever he urged the reluctant god to mend his speed or to smite harder.

"No faltering, Hephaestus," he cried, "drive that wedge home; another rivet to yon armlet, else may this cunning one slip his gyves! So—are all his limbs made fast? Up with thy hammer, then, and drive this adamant nail sheer through him from breast-bone to back! What, shuddering thou'st done it—weeping over one that Zeus abhors? Beware, Haltfoot, beware lest thy tears fall shortly for thine own plight, not another's!"

"O brutish in soul as in shape," at last rejoined Hephaestus, "refrain thy clamour, importune me no more; behold, I have finished the work—the deed I could not help is fully done. Let us go hence —since nothing it avails to linger now."

With that, the sorrowing god went his way, and the two giants followed; but Kratos turned to fling a parting taunt at their mute, rigid victim. "Aha, Fire-stealer," he cried, "*there* flaunt thine insolence, *there* purloin for miserable men what belongeth to the gods! Sure, 'tis in error the Immortals call thee *Prometheus*, who art so much in need of Fore-

thought to extricate thee from this our handiwork!" So saying, he also departed from the ravine.

All this while the Titan had kept silence, nor even when the nail pierced his breast came word or sound from his lips; but now, alone with his agony, he lifted up his mighty voice and cried aloud, "O radiant Sky, O swift-winged Winds and Founts of the Rivers, and thou, immeasurable laughter of the Sea; O Earth, Mother of all, and thou, all-surveying Sun, behold and bear witness what ills I suffer at the hands of gods, myself a god! Look on these shameful bonds, wherein I must wrestle unreprieved with age-long tortures—such doom the new-throned Tyrant of the skies hath decreed me, for the sin of secretly conveying to mortals the forbidden Fire, Teacher and Author of all life-fostering arts. . . . Yet wherefore should I thus bewail what I foreknew from the beginning? All that is come upon me, and is yet to come, have I envisaged; not one stroke that Destiny has in store can fall on me unforeseen. Let me endure, then, as one that knows how vain it is to strive against Necessity."

Then all was still awhile in the dreadful glen. But by and by Prometheus spoke again, not without a shudder, "Hark, what soft, rustling sound is that o'erhead? What fragrance is wafted about me? Who comes, god or half-god or mortal—and what brings him to my rocky dungeon at the world's end? Is it to feast his eyes on suffering, or to behold a god, once mighty, racked with torments manifold, hated of Zeus, scorned of all the heaven-dwelling Olympians? List, again the beating of wings!

Alas! How is't with me when everything that draws nigh unseen is to me an embodied Fear? "

" Ah, fear not us," rang sweet voices overhead, " for as friends we come; " and with that, Prometheus saw a band of lovely, green-robed maidens hovering near, upborne in wingéd cars of pearl; and he knew them for the daughters of ancient Oceanus. Then said the eldest of that gentle sisterhood, " Far, far away, in our unfathomed coral caves, we heard the smith-god's hammer clang on this rocky anvil; at that sound, Prometheus, virgin bashfulness forsook our brows, and hither we sped, breeze-wafted in aërial chariots, soon as our pleading won consent of our Ocean Sire."

" Ah, beautiful Sea-children," replied the Titan, " 'tis a grim sight ye have journeyed so far to behold. . . . Oh, that the tyrant had hurled me into the vasty deep of Tartarus—that I might have lain fettered in the abyss of darkness no eye can pierce! But now am I set on high—a vane for the wind's sport, a mark for the heaven-dwellers' derision—where all that hate me may see and laugh me to scorn."

Then the Ocean Nymphs wept one and all, and the eldest answered through her tears, " Nay, now, who among the gods bears a mind so pitiless that he sorrows not with thy sorrow? None, well I wot—save Zeus only. But he, alas, stern conqueror of the primeval Powers, rules his new realm with oppressive, arbitrary sway, knowing no law but his own relentless will. Nor mayest thou hope surcease of pain, until his wrath be glutted with vengeance—

unless—unless, a mightier than he should arise and overthrow him. Vain thought! For who is like unto Zeus of gods that have been, or with whom shall I compare him? Great Uranus, first of the Sky-Kings, was less of might by far; Cronus of the crooked counsels vied not with him in deep contriving. Fallen, fallen are the Ancient Powers, and their place knows them no more—but invincible Zeus reigneth a king for ever."

"Be not too sure of that," exclaimed Prometheus, "for I tell you, maidens, the day shall yet come, though ages hence, when this new-throned tyrant, this upstart, courted now by troops of cringing gods, shall sue to *me* for help—in his dire need! Yea, I alone foresee what doom must overtake him, unless he learn of me the one way of escape—and that secret neither his threats nor pleading shall wring from me, until he humble himself to reverse his sentence, and with his own hands undo these bonds, and make me atonement for the outrage he hath done."

"Hush, O hush!" cried the trembling Nymphs, "lest Zeus overhear thee, and his wrath be kindled yet the more. Alas, over-dauntless one, hast thou not pangs enough, that thou wouldst provoke him to afflict thee still more grievously? Ah, beware rash words against the King supreme."

"Are *ye* also his courtiers?" said the Titan, scornfully. "Flatter and fawn on him, then—true to your sex, for whom Might and Right are ever one. But to me this all-puissant Zeus is a thing of nought. Let him work his will while he may, let him reign and revel it in heaven, proud in his usurped

authority—for it shall be brief! . . . But who comes yonder, winging his way on feathered steed? Maidens, here is a marvel in sooth, 'tis Oceanus comes, your hoary sire!"

Even as he spoke, a gryphon flew down into the ravine on mighty pinions, and crouched before them; and from his back slowly alighted the Ancient of the Sea. "Yea, it is I, Prometheus," he said; "from my far Western home, through the long highways of the air, come I to this bourne, guiding with will, not bridle, my twy-formed, wingéd courser. For, trust me, I much lament thy plight, and not alone for our kinship's sake; wert thou no kin to me, Titan, I should yet hold none other in higher regard. I say it, and I will prove it; no dealer I in empty phrases of compliment! Let me but hear what service I can do thee, and thou shalt own thou hast no truer, trustier friend than Oceanus."

"Why, this is wonderful," answered Prometheus, bitterly; "hast thou indeed hazarded thyself on such a journey to see and beweep my pains? What, am I made a show and gazing-stock even unto thee, that dwellest at the world's other end? Look thy fill then; here stands the friend and benefactor of Zeus, co-founder of his sovereignty—behold, and mark these tokens of his gratitude! Well—now thou seest, what thinkest thou of the sight?"

"I think," gravely replied Oceanus, "thou hast need of counsel, wise though thou art, wherefore hear me patiently, I pray thee, while I speak a timely warning. Avise thee who and what thou art

—and what *He* is at whom thou flingest words of reproach and scorn. Can taunts and railing do aught for thee, poor wretch—save bring worse punishment upon thy head, if it reach His ears above? But ever thy spirit was haughty, brooking not to yield; and now, still unsubdued, it prompts thee to heap woe on woe by vain defiance. Alas, why wilt thou kick against the pricks? If thou wilt take my rede, and curb thy froward tongue henceforth, I will go straightway to Zeus and intercede with him on thy behalf. For I am well assured he will not deny *me* the boon I shall crave —even thy pardon and release, stern despot though he be."

"Nay, let that alone," said Prometheus, "never wilt thou persuade him — thou wilt but lose thy labour, and rue thy mission besides."

"Doubtless, his wrath yet swells high against thee," answered the other, "but knows not thy wisdom the adage—*Apt words have power to 'suage the tumours of a troubled mind?*"

"I tell thee, Ancient," said Prometheus, "by no words thou canst utter wilt thou appease the hate Zeus bears me. Take heed thou dost not rather draw like hate upon thyself, if thou plead the cause of his enemy! And if that befall, thinkest thou 'twill make my pain the lighter to know it hath wrought another's ruin? Ah, more galling to me than these bonds is the thought of my brother Atlas' punishment—he that stands, and must stand for ever, at the Gates of the Sunset, his shoulders bowed under the load of the massy pillar that bears

up the vault of heaven! Wouldst thou be as he is—or as I am, whom thou beholdest? Better look to thine own safety, and keep aloof from the woes of others, lest thou share therein."

Pale waxed agéd Oceanus, and with troubled look he said, "Thou biddest me, it seems, return whence I came? Perchance that were wisest, for verily, thy fate warns me no less plainly than thy words."

"Ay, mount and away," replied Prometheus, not without scorn; "be ever discreet as now—so shalt thou fare well."

Conscious of the veiled rebuke to his faint-heartedness, Oceanus assumed the more dignity, as a man will that knows he is playing a sorry part, and said with feigned indifference, "Thy counsel chimes with my purpose, Prometheus; I was in act to mount and ride—for lo, my gryphon here flaps his wings restlessly, full fain to be home again in his ocean stall." Then hastily the ancient god bestrode the weird eagle-headed beast, which soared with him into upper air, and took its swift flight westward.

During this colloquy, the Ocean Nymphs had lighted down from their aëry cars; they listened in duteous silence while their father spoke, and it was to be read in their faces that they approved his counsels of submission to the will of Zeus. But he no sooner departed than they gathered about Prometheus, lamenting his fate anew in a mournful song, while the tears rained from their sweet eyes. Then said he unto them, "Weep not, O gentle hearts, nor sorrow for me as one past hope. Have

I not told you this Zeus ye dread so much shall yet be humbled, for all his headstrong pride? Yea, for such wedlock he will compass for himself as shall hurl him from his throne into oblivion's dark abyss. Then shall the curse that Cronus his sire invoked upon him in the hour of his overthrow find uttermost fulfilment. Then let him roll his thunder and dart his lightnings, whereby he deems himself secure; little shall they avail to stay his fall into the lowest depths of infamy! For the adversary that his own act will raise up to his own ruin shall wield a weapon more dazzling than the levin-brand, more deadly than the thunderbolt, more mighty than Poseidon's earth-splitting trident. Ay, once Zeus grapples with *that* wrestler, full soon shall he be taught how wide a gulf is fixed between empire and—slavery!"

"What sayest thou?" exclaimed the Ocean Nymphs. "Dare we in very truth look for a vanquisher of Zeus?"

"I have said it," replied Prometheus, "and I say further, that Zeus shall lie fettered in more cruel bondage than mine." And at that the Nymphs, shuddering, entreated him to forbear such words, lest peradventure Zeus should overhear.

"Why, so he may, for aught I care," said the Titan; "for to slay me, who am immortal, is beyond his power, and all he can inflict I have foreseen, and armed myself to endure. But see, yonder comes his messenger, a household varlet, brave in his new master's livery, fraught, doubtless, with some new-minted edict!"

It was Hermes the divine Herald who now alighted before them on feather-sandalled feet; tiptoe he stood, waving his wand of office, and accosted Prometheus in imperious tones—

"Hear, thou trickster, wounded by thine own wit's keen edge, thou sinner against gods for men's sake, thief of their sacred fire! The supreme Father bids thee declare what marriage it is thou dost brag of as destined to overthrow him. Answer, and in plain words! No riddling—I must have a clear message to take back, else I shall be sent this toilsome journey yet again."

To whom the great Titan answered in tones of calm disdain—

"How well, lackey of the gods, this pompous, loud-mouthed insolence fits thy menial part! Ah, ye younger gods, with what youthful arrogance do ye lord it now, trusting yourselves impregnable in your sky-stronghold! Yet have I seen two despots flung helpless thence, ay, and shall see a third, now exalted in sceptred sway, cast down with yet more hideous ruin and confusion—in a moment. What, dost thou think I tremble and bow down before these new-come gods? I am far enough from that, I trow! Begone then, trudge, get thee back the way thou camest, for answer will I give thee none."

"Thy pride doth make thee mad," cried the herald god, angrily. "Think again, rebel; be warned; think what Zeus may have in store for thee, if thou prove stubborn."

"Let him do his worst," replied Prometheus, "and thou, vex me no more with idle words.

Hence to thy master, and bear him, if thou wilt, my scorn and abhorrence—no other message. Go, my resolve is fixed, immovable."

"Then hear," said Hermes, "the penalty Zeus hath denounced upon thee if thou answer him not. First, he will shatter these rocks with flaming thunderbolts and pile them upon thee, and thou shalt be cabined painfully in a craggy tomb. Then, after aeons of that misery, thou shalt stand under open sky once more; and then shall the wingéd Hound of Zeus, his tawny Eagle, rive all thy flesh to shreds and tatters with ravening beak—ay, that feast-mate unbidden will haunt thee day by day from morn to night, gorging on gobbets of thy wound-blackened vitals. And look thou for no end to that ordeal of agony, until some god be found willing to suffer in thy stead and pass for thy sake into the rayless mirk of hell. . . . Will not these tidings unlock thy lips? . . . Still obdurate, art thou? Abide thy doom, then, but ye, commiserating sister Nymphs, depart hence with all speed, ere the crash of the imminent thunderbolts make havoc of your senses."

But the daughters of Ocean drew closer to the Titan's side, and the eldest answered, "Out on thee, Hermes, and thy craven counsel! Far be from me and mine the baseness of forsaking a friend in his distress. No, here at his side we will share whatever doom befalls him, for nought doth our soul more loathe and despise than traitors."

"Well, ye are warned," said Hermes; "remember it, when you shall find yourselves caught in destruc-

tion's toils, and accuse not Fate, nor cry out that Zeus hath trapped you unawares, for by your own wilful folly do you enmesh yourselves in a vast web of calamity." So saying, he sped heavenward through the azure.

Then, suddenly, gross darkness fell over land and sea, and all the air shook with the thunder's awful roar and blazed with the lightning's blue, zig-zag flames. But louder than the thunder-peals rose the scream of the hurricane as it swept through the ravine, whirling pillars of dust aloft — and more dread than either echoed from underground the hollow, booming noise that heralds the earthquake. And now the earth heaved like a heaving sea; the rampired cliffs tottered on their bases, and huge fragments of rock crashed down from their thunder-riven summits. Faithful to the last, the Ocean Nymphs clung one to another in the pitchy gloom, trembling but silent; until, like forest leaves, their light forms were swept away on the wings of the whirlwind, far over the midland main. Yet not before, through the wild uproar of that elemental strife, they heard once again the calm voice of Prometheus—

"Thus on my head Zeus pours all the vials of his wrath; thus marshals all his terrors, rank on rank, before mine eyes, to confound my soul. O holy Earth, my mother! O Sky, whose circling lights enlighten every man, bear witness, bear witness to my wrongs!"

PART II

THE OLYMPIANS

CHAPTER IV

HERA, WIFE AND QUEEN

"Wedding is great Juno's crown:
O blesséd bond of board and bed!"
As You Like It.

ARGOS, that proud and ancient city, disputed with the wealthy Island-State of Samos the honour of being Queen Hera's birthplace. The Samians, indeed, could show the very Willow under whose shelter she was born—the oldest tree in all the world; but the Argives deemed they had better proofs in the special favour that the Goddess ever vouchsafed their land from the beginning, and the immemorial antiquity of her great temple there. And to this, at least, every Poet bore witness, that Argos was the home of Hera's girlhood. For which reason, as some say, King Zeus gave her that land for her own what time he parcelled out the earth among his kindred. Be all this as it may, we tell now the tale of Hera's wooing and wifehood, as the Argives told it long ago.

The first King of Argos was Inachus the River-God, whose eddying stream clothed with lush grasses the pastures of its hill-girt plain, where browsed great herds of stately, deep-uddered kine. While

war raged yet in heaven between Titans and Olympians, Rhea brought her maiden-child Hera to King Inachus, that she might be reared in peace and safety under his guardianship. He, reverencing the august Mother of the Gods, gladly undertook that charge; where Hera's temple now stands, he builded a bower for the divine maiden, and appointed his own daughters to tend upon her. So she abode on earth, aloof from all her kindred, until long after Zeus, her brother, had come into his kingdom.

But it chanced on a day, while Zeus was looking down from heaven, after his manner, to behold the dwellers upon earth, that his eyes lighted upon Hera, who had wandered forth alone to the mountain called Euboea, that rises behind her temple. It was a morn of Spring, and in beauty like April's own the young goddess walked the hillside, gathering a lapful of the small white starwort that grows so thickly there. And no sooner had Zeus beheld her, than love beyond all he had known for others overflowed his mighty heart, insomuch that he resolved on the instant to make her his wife and queen, and to put away Themis, Lady of Good Counsel, Daughter of Earth, whom he had wedded aforetime. Forthwith he covered the heavens with clouds, and chilled all the air, and sent down whirling snow-showers upon earth; and Hera made all speed to take shelter in her bower from the arrowy storm. Now as she went, a Cuckoo came fluttering to her feet, and lay there like a dead thing, overcome, as it seemed, by the sudden,

piercing cold; and she took it up and laid it in her bosom, to warm it back to life if she could. But when she had entered into the well-built bower, and shut the door against the tempest, she felt the Cuckoo struggle under her robe, and would have drawn it forth, but she could not, for the bird clung to her with feet and wings, and it swelled in her hands to the bigness of an Eagle—and suddenly it grew greater than any Eagle, and its form changed before her eyes. Then Hera trembled, and durst not behold; she knew only that not wings but mighty arms held her fast, ere she sank into a swoon of terror. . . .

Now when Hera came to herself, Zeus was beside her in his own likeness; and she began to reproach him, saying, "Why hast thou done me this evil, my brother, to steal away my virginity, which was my pride, and to make me without honour in the sight of gods and men? Ah, thief and shameless, are there not goddesses enow of lower degree with whom to take thy pleasure, but thou must deflower Hera of Argos, thine equal, the child of great Cronus even as thou art, and thine elder by birth?"

But Zeus answered, smiling, "Upbraid me not, lady Hera, with loss of thine honour and renown, for by implacable Styx I swear I will so add thereto as shall well content that proud heart of thine. My wedded wife shalt thou be, and crowned Queen of the immortal gods, from this day forth and for evermore. Such shall be thy place and dignity in heaven, second to mine only; and this prerogative do I give thee, Goddess, on earth—even to be

guardian of the sacred marriage-bed and protectress of wedded womanhood. There shall be none among the gods more widely worshipped than Hera; for whensoever mortals are joined in wedlock, they shall invoke her blessing with sacrifice and holy rites."

When Hera heard these things, her heart relented towards Zeus, and for the glory set before her she consented to take him as her lord and husband. And straightway Zeus bore his bride to the misty shores of the Ocean Stream, in the utmost West, for he would hold his marriage-feast in those boundless plains, where all the Immortals and all mankind might find room enough at the banquet. And in the place of banished Cronus and of Rhea, he appointed ancient Oceanus and Tethys his wife to fulfil the offices of father and mother to the bride, because they were the eldest of his kindred, being the firstborn of Earth and Sky. From their hands the king of gods received his glorious spouse, when the sacred Seasons had arrayed her in a vesture of wrought gold, and a flower-inwoven veil, ambrosial, many-hued, and set a crown of pure gold upon her head. And all the gods and all mankind, yea, beasts and birds and all living creatures, were bidden to the Marriage Feast of Zeus and Hera; nor was there one of that countless host but had his fill and more of whatsoever good cheer his heart most desired, both meat and drink. So the whole world made merry at that great Feast, beholding with glad wonder the Bridegroom and the Bride exalted on their golden thrones; then did the floods

clap their hands and the hills were joyful together, as the sweet, heaven-shaking voices of the Muses raised the mystic, nuptial cry, "*Hymen, O Hymenaee!*"

But while all else that lived hasted to obey the summons of Zeus, a certain damsel of Arcadia, Chelone by name, abode at home through mere slothfulness. "Wedding-feasts are none so scarce," quoth she, "that a body need journey to the world's end only to sit at one." And she would not so much as lift up her voice when all creatures besides re-echoed the nuptial shout, but said in her heart, "What are Zeus or his bride to me, that I should pay them lip-service?" Then, because she had contemned those thrice-holy espousals, the wrath of Zeus was kindled against the damsel, and he changed her into the shelly Tortoise, that the Greeks call Chelone after her name. This is why tortoises are the slowest-footed of all beasts, and have no voice; because the mother of them all would not hasten when she was bidden to the wedding of Zeus, nor utter her voice in his honour.

Now Queen Hera bore her lord two daughters, beautiful as the day, Eileithyia her first-born, and radiant Hebe, whose name means "Youth," being interpreted. And to Eileithyia her mother gave no mean share of her own prerogatives, even that she should be Goddess of Childbirth, having power to succour women in travail and grant them delivery safe and swift. Nor without grace of that gentle Goddess do any of us look upon the light of day. But to Hebe Zeus gave power over the childhood

and youth of mortals; and her sweet ministry it is that rears to stately height the forms of young men and maidens, that makes their limbs round and supple, and their cheeks to bloom as the rose. She herself wears eternally the fresh beauty of budding girlhood; and as a youthful daughter may, so dwells Hebe fancy-free in her Father's house, and fills his cup with nectar at the banquet.

Such and so gracious were the children Hera had by Zeus while as yet she was at peace with him. But in no long time he began to provoke her to jealousy, and bitter quarrels arose between them; for not tamely could she brook, proud Queen, to see her wedded husband the lover of other goddesses and of mortal women, but would fiercely upbraid him with her wrongs. And while wrath was hot in her heart, she brought forth her son ARES, fair and terrible, delighting from his birth in violence and strife. A child of wrath indeed, Ares had no mind to the serene life of the Olympians—that feast perpetual, never-cloying, where they hear enthralled the ceaseless melody of the Muses, forever chanting songs forever new. Therefore he made his home with the wild Thracian folk, that are of all men fiercest and most lawless, rejoicing in bloodshed; and they honour above all gods Ares, the warrior, lord and lover of the battle-din, at whose dread shout in the mellay kings with their armies flee and are discomfited.

After this, Queen Hera was yet more estranged from Zeus through wifely jealousy, and because he preferred his sons by other goddesses to greater

honour than Ares, who was hateful to him for his unruly violence; and she forsook his bed, being resolved to give him no more children. But it came into her mind that if she had a son all her own he would be his mother's champion and avenge her wrongs upon Zeus; so she made her prayer to life-giving Earth that she might conceive and bear a male child unbegotten of a father. That prayer Earth granted, causing Hera to become pregnant by smelling a certain aromatic herb; but when her babe was born, the goddess shuddered at the view of him, for he was dwarfish and bow-legged and bitter ugly, and had one foot twisted.

Never might she endure to be the laughing-stock of the other goddesses and their glorious offspring as the mother of this misshapen thing; and in rage and shame she took up the child and flung him sheer over the crystal battlements of heaven into the sea. There must he have perished, had not Thetis, daughter of Nereus, and her sister Eurynome, taken pity on the helpless babe. Those gentle Sea-Nymphs held up their pearléd wrists and drew him under the tossing waves to their coral bowers in the calm, green depths; and tenderly they reared him there, nourishing him on divine ambrosia, whence the gods receive their strength and immortality. Nine years dwelt Hera's outcast son with his kindly nurses under the murmuring foam, and waxed lusty and strong, though he halted ever in his gait by reason of his crooked foot. And from a child he began to be a cunning workman, skilled in all manner of handicrafts, and above all

in that of a smith; self-taught, he fashioned himself hammer, chisels, and anvil, and made his forge beside the hearth in the cavern-halls of Nereus; and there he wrought necklaces of gold and amber, thrones of chased silver, and tripods carved in flashing bronze, to pleasure the Sea-Nymphs.

Now Thetis and Eurynome called their nursling HEPHAESTUS, and by that name the haltfoot god was known thereafter in earth and heaven; but for nine years he lay hid from sight of gods and men, save only all-beholding Zeus. When the nine years were ended, Hephaestus was fain to do greater works and win himself renown; he went to the Forge of the Cyclopes, in the fiery base of snow-crowned Etna; and those swart, earth-born smiths were full fain of the young god's coming when they saw the mastery he had of their craft. And there he wrought so wondrously that the fame of his works was noised in heaven; insomuch that the Olympians were eager to have such an artificer among them, and at their request Zeus summoned him to his abode on high. And all the gods received Hephaestus with honour, for the sake of his art incomparable; and Queen Hera had no longer shame to own him for her son. And Hephaestus harboured no malice against his mother for what she had done to him; but was ever ready to serve her and take her part. Many a time he made peace between her and King Zeus when they wrangled at the board, turning their wrath to laughter by his pleasantries and by his uncouth gait and gestures as he hobbled to and fro, playing the busy cupbearer. Once, indeed, he

braved peril most deadly for Hera's sake, when she had goaded Zeus to fury with wingéd words, so that he lifted his hand to chastise her. For thereupon Hephaestus thrust in between to save his mother; but Zeus caught him by his lame foot and sent him whirling through heaven as a strong thrower whirls the discus. Nine days fell Hephaestus, spinning through air, before he fell to earth on island Lemnos; and he lay half-dead with the pain of his great fall until the Sintians, folk of that isle, recovered him. But by and by Zeus repented him of his anger, and would have the Smith-god dwell with him again; so to make amends he gave Hephaestus the lordship of Lemnos; and that contented him well, for the isle was rich in metals and had a mountain full of fire within, where he might have his forge. Thus Lemnos became the chief seat and sanctuary of Hephaestus, God of Craftsmen.

Now while Hera reigned Queen in heaven, she did not forget the land of Argos, where she was brought up, but it was ever dear to her heart. By her commandment, her foster-father Inachus builded a temple where her maiden bower had stood, and made his daughters priestesses thereof; and they with the folk of Argos worshipped Hera above all gods, as Lady of their land. Which things were a grief of mind to Poseidon the Earth-Shaker, for in the beginning he had been their chief god. So he made his complaint to Zeus. And Zeus was in a strait how best to do; since on the one hand he had allotted Argos to his Queen for dower; but,

on the other hand, he would fain avoid strife with his brother. For Poseidon was strongest of all gods, next to himself, proud-hearted, dauntless, an adversary not lightly to be encountered. Nay, he feared not to call himself the peer of Zeus, remembering how he was his elder by birth, and trusting that his great earth-splitting trident was not less of might than the thunderbolts. Wherefore, having pondered awhile, Zeus now answered him craftily with smooth words, saying, "Let it not displease thee, my brother, that I will be no judge of this matter. Far rather would I content thee than Hera, for thou knowest well the ill life she leads me, with her revilings, and how she is never weary of thwarting me in all things. But were I now to give thee her loved Argos, such tumult would she raise in heaven that neither thou nor I nor the rest of the Olympians should have either peace or pleasure thenceforward. Now, therefore, let Inachus judge between you twain, whose the land shall be; methinks he, being a River-god, will in nowise affront Poseidon, Lord of the Waters under the earth."

Then Poseidon consented, well pleased, and came and told Queen Hera the will of Zeus. And they went down both of them to Argos, and bade Inachus give judgment, who should take the land to have and to hold, Hera or Poseidon. But nothing doubted Poseidon that Argos should be awarded to himself; for his was the more ancient right, and assuredly the River-god would fear to offend the Lord of Waters, as Zeus had said. But Inachus

gave judgment for Hera, in her lovely maidenhood the joy of Argos, in her glorious wifehood its pride and boast. Thereat the God of the Sea raged terribly awhile, after his manner; yet perforce must he abide by the judgment of the River-god, having consented so to do. Howbeit, he took his revenge on him; for with one blow of the trident he closed up the nether springs that fed his stream perpetually. From that day to this, the river Inachus has no water but that which Zeus sends him in the rain and in the snow; so in winter he rolls full-fed to the sea, but in summer his channel is dry, a tract of sand. And his plain stood thick with pasturage no more, being waterless in the summer heats; nor had Argos renown any more as the nurse of kine, but men called her "Thirsty Argos," after Poseidon made all her springs to fail.

Nevertheless, Inachus and his kingdom prospered exceedingly by grace of Hera, until the wrath of the goddess fell on one of his daughters, the youngest among them, and the loveliest. This maiden, whose name was Io, ministered from a child in Hera's temple; and when she was of age to be wedded, she prayed her father not to bestow her in marriage, but suffer her to serve the goddess all her days, a virgin priestess. For she had no mind to a husband, but rather to live free in her dear parents' house, with no cares or tasks save duly to fulfil the sacred rites. Inachus consented; and for a time Io was the happiest of maidens, diligent in her hallowed office and winning high favour with Queen Hera for her piety.

But after a while, strange dreams began to haunt the maiden, so that she had no rest by night because of them. For as she lay sleeping in her fair-walled chamber, she was 'ware of Shapes unknown hovering about her; and evermore they murmured in her ear such words as these: *" O thou that art highly favoured among women, how long wilt thou cleave to thy virginity, while thy glorious Bridegroom tarrieth for thee, consumed with longing? Arise now, daughter of Inachus, and go forth to meet him in the dewy mead beside Lerna's fount; so shall the King of Gods have pleasure in thy beauty, that hath pierced his mighty heart with keen arrows of desire."* Now Io was troubled at those sayings, for they were dark to her; and at last she told them to her father, entreating counsel of him concerning her nightly visions. But neither could King Inachus interpret them; and in great perplexity he sent messengers to the chiefest places of oracle, to Delphi and far Dodona, to inquire the meaning of the dreams, and what the gods would have him do. So the messengers went and returned again; but the answers they brought from the oracles were obscure, passing the wit of man to unriddle. Then Inachus sent a second and a third time; and still the answers he received baffled his understanding. Yet he persevered; and when months had now gone by, there came to him at last an oracle plain and clear, spoken of Apollo by the mouth of his priestess. And this was the god's bidding—that he should forthwith cast out Io from his house and from the land of Argos; for if he did not, Zeus would utterly consume

him and all his folk, and the land itself, with flaming thunderbolts. A bitter hearing was that to the King, and sorely wept he over his weeping child; loth, loth were they to part, but there was no remedy; and so beautiful Io went forth to wander homeless in strange lands.

Now as she fared all alone to the border of Argos, the maiden came to the meadow and wellspring of Lerna, and sat her down to rest awhile on the flowery grass. And suddenly there stood before her Queen Hera in all her splendour, crowned with a crown of golden lilies, and having in her right hand a golden sceptre topped with a cuckoo. Darkly frowned the goddess on her priestess, and angry light flashed from her great eyes that were like the eyes of kine. "Ah, false and shameless," said she, "now learn how Hera can repay a bondmaid's insolence. What, minion, could no lover but high Zeus serve thy turn? Was it for this thou wert so fain to live unwed? Nay, deny it not; these many months hath he been with thee in secret; and now hath bidden thy father cast thee out of this my land the better to deceive me. For he thinketh to enjoy thee at his ease, unknown to gods or men, in some hidden place of the hills. But that shall he never—nor behold again that lovesome form of thine, for I will change it even now!"

So saying, Hera stretched forth her sceptre and touched the shuddering maiden therewith on breast and brow. And immediately fierce pangs smote through Io's limbs, as it were the rending asunder

of soul and body; they endured but for an instant, and in that instant the dread change was wrought. A beautiful white heifer stood before the wrathful goddess, with human tears welling from its lustrous eyes.

Then Hera clapped her hands together, laughing aloud, and said, "My heifer, most beauteous of thy kind, I must set a herdsman to keep watch over thee, lest, if thou stray in the meadows, some bold thief be tempted to steal so goodly a prize." And with that she called to her Argus, her servant, that dwelt nigh at hand. Now Argus was of the race of the Earth-born Giants; and he had a hundred eyes set in his head and body, before and behind; nor could god or man take him at unawares, for never slept he wholly, but while half his eyes were closed in slumber the other half stared broad awake. To his keeping, therefore, Hera gave hapless Io, that Zeus might not be able to deliver her either by night or by day.

So when Zeus sent Hermes, the divine herald, to release Io by stealth, the wily god found the white heifer tethered to the stem of an olive, and Argus keeping his watch close by. Hermes hid himself in a neighbouring thicket, to wait the herdsman's falling asleep; but when he saw that all the hundred eyes were never closed at once, he had recourse to subtlety. For he drew near to the Giant in the likeness of a shepherd lad, with crook and wallet, and he was piping sweetly as he came on a pipe of reed. "Shepherd," said Argus, "if thou wilt sit down here and pipe to me awhile, I will give thee

good reward, for this is the sweetest strain ever I heard."

"Wilt thou give me the white heifer that is tied to yonder tree, herdsman?" said the lad, smiling.

"Nay, that I cannot, for she belongs to my Mistress," answered Argus, "but I will give thee a lamb from my own fold yonder."

"That shall content me," said Hermes, and he sat him down and piped a ditty more honey-sweet than the other. And at those lulling sounds drowsiness stole on Argus, and his hundred eyes began to blink and close; yet he kept ten open until the shepherd suddenly waved his crook before them. Then they shut fast, for that crook was Hermes' magic wand, wherewith he charms asleep the eyes of whom he will. Up he sprang and drew a sharp sickle from his wallet, and with one blow he cut off the Giant's head. And because of this feat the Olympians surnamed Hermes *Argeiphontes*—that is, the Argus-killer.

But Hera saw what was done, and even as Hermes loosed the heifer she caused a great gad-fly to sting her glossy flank; and she bounded away over hill and dale like a mad thing, pursued by that fierce tormentor. And she roamed in frenzy over the whole earth, still hunted onward by the fell minister of Hera's vengeance. There was no land under heaven that saw not wretched Io pass by in her four-footed shape, seeking rest and finding none. First she came to the Western shores of Greece, and to Thesprotian Dodona, where Zeus hath his oracle in the solemn oak-grove that

is the wonder of the world. For those oaks talk with human voice, prophesying things to come. And as Io went through the grove they murmured, "*Hail, glorious Spouse of Zeus;*" but she, being distraught, heard nothing but the rustling of their leaves. After that, she swam the narrow seas that are called from her the Ionian, to the coasts of Illyria, and fared still Westward to the marge of boundless Ocean; there turned she Eastward again, ill-starred wanderer, and traversed the vast European plain even unto Scythia. Southward then the gad-fly drove her, and she swam the strait that divides Europe from Asia, wherefore it is called Bosporus, the Ox-Ford, unto this day. And next she took her toilsome way over the passes of Caucasus, hugest of mountains, whose peaks neighbour the stars; and so on through the Asian lands to the great Fount of the Sun in the utmost East. Now was Io come into the borders of the Ethiopians, the blameless folk, dear to the Immortals, who dwell nearest of all men to the Sun, inhabiting the countries between the river Ethiops, that rises from his Fount, and the Bybline Mountains, sources of holy Nile. A thousand leagues she journeyed from one river to the other; and having reached the Bybline Mountains she followed the Nile-stream through Libya into the land of Egypt. And there, in the rich, black-soiled Delta of Nile, deliverance came to her at last.

For while the outwearied Heifer paused to drink the sacred waters of Nile, Zeus himself drew near and laid his hand full gently on her side. That touch

dissolved the cruel spell that bound the maiden, and healed her frenzied brain; in the twinkling of an eye her own shape was restored to her with all its beauty, and she came again to her right mind, so that she wept tears of gladness, and kneeled before the King of Gods, praising his name. And Zeus said to her; "Daughter of Inachus, now are thy long woes ended and thou shalt have double for all thy pains. For by the laying on of my hand thou shalt conceive and bear a son, whose name shall be called Epaphus, the Touch-born. He shall be great, and the father of mighty nations; moreover his seed shall be kings of Argos, thy homeland, in ages yet to come. But thee will I make immortal, and a goddess; and as Hera is in Argos, so shall Io be in the land of Egypt, holding dominion over it for ever; and not Hera, but Io, shall its folk honour as the Spouse of Zeus. Yea, greater glory than hers shall be thine in the after time; for peoples yet unborn shall worship thee by the name thou shalt bear henceforth, and build temples in their noblest cities to Isis of the Egyptians." Thus spoke Zeus, bending his majestic head for token that his promise was sure; and all his word was fulfilled to Io by the high-throned Fates.

Now turn we again to Queen Hera, and what she did when she saw her giant herdsman slain by cunning Hermes. Down from her golden house she flew and stood beside dead Argus, grieved at heart; for because a god had slain him, she could not bring him back to life. But she caused to

spring from his blood a crested bird, sapphire-throated, with long train of waving plumes, and in those plumes she set the hundred starry eyes of Argus, to be a memorial of him. And she took that bird for her pensioner and favourite; so that he and his kind were ever after to be seen in her temple courts, and men held them sacred to the goddess. This is why the Peacock's train glitters as with a hundred gems, and why he walks ever proudly, as befits the courtier of a great queen.

CHAPTER V

DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE

"That fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers
(Herself a fairer flower) by gloomy Dis
Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world."

Paradise Lost.

THE Goddess Demeter, albeit she was one of the Olympians, being daughter to Cronus and Rhea, had closer affinity with the disinherited Earth-born Powers, and loved their woodland haunts better than all the splendours of the sky. Seldom came she to feast or council in the heavenly halls, but dwelt among the green pastures of mountain-girt Arcadia. There she bore her only child, the maiden Persephone, of whom certain poets call Zeus the sire, but the Arcadians, most ancient of peoples, believed otherwise. For, as their legend ran, Poseidon the Earth-Shaker wooed Demeter for her beauty's sake; but she would none of him, and took the form of a Black Mare to baffle his pursuit. Straightway the God put on the likeness of a noble Horse, and in that shape gained what he desired. Sore angered, Demeter hid herself nine months in dens and caves, and all that while her wrath divine made winter over Arcadia; but when her babe was born she remembered no more her anger, for joy

that she had brought a creature so lovely into the world. And Earth joyed with the new-made Mother, and gave her a gift in that hour, even power to bless the fields with increase, that men might praise Demeter's name in all time coming.

Now when Persephone had grown to girlhood, Pluto, King in Hades, sought a boon of Zeus his brother, namely, that he would give him the fairest maiden alive to be his bride and queen. And Zeus, willing to pleasure his brother, answered, "I will give you, then, Demeter's daughter, white and slender as a lily of the field; but you must seize upon her unawares, for her mother loves her too well to yield her up at my bidding. Now is the Springtime, and Persephone is straying in the flowery land of Sicily, with her maiden playfellows; watch, therefore, until you see her caught by the lure I will provide."

On the morrow's morn, Persephone and the deep-girdled Ocean Nymphs, her playmates, went roaming blithe as young fawns over the lush meadow grass, filling their laps with flowers of all hues—rose, crocus, hyacinth, iris, and the sweet violet. But Persephone caught sight of a flower strange and new, shining in a mossy dell, and turned aside to view it more nearly. And being come to the flower, she stood rapt in wonder and delight; for on one tall branching stem it bore a hundred blooms of the silver-petalled narcissus, and their sweet, heady perfume was as ointment poured forth out of ivory chalices. This marvel did Earth send up from her bosom at the behest of Zeus, to beguile

the eyes of the witless maiden and sunder her from her companions. Then, even as she stooped to pluck the glittering lure, the ground was cleft in twain under her feet; a golden chariot with coal-black steeds rose up through the chasm; the dark Charioteer caught in his arms the shrieking maiden and sank with her into the nether shades.

Loud wailed Demeter's hapless daughter, calling for help on Father Zeus, Saviour of Suppliants; but he heard her not, for he was gone from his throne on high to the far Libyan land, where his great Temple is, to feast on the savoury steam of his burnt-offerings. And none else of mortals or immortals heard the piteous cry, save all-seeing Helios the Sun-God and Hecate the Witch-Goddess. But even as the earth closed above her, Persephone cried yet again with an exceeding bitter cry, "*O Mother, save me, for I perish!*" That heard Demeter far away in leafy Arcadia; for Hills, Winds, and Waves sped on the sound, in pity to the flower-sweet maid, and anguish like a sword pierced her mother-heart. Forthwith she tore the snood from her fragrant hair and wrapped herself in a mantle of darkest grain; and swift as bird can fly she traversed sea and land in search of her lost one. But neither by sea nor land, neither from mortals nor immortals, nor any bird in air, could she learn tidings of her daughter. Nine days and nights the Goddess wandered without rest, tasting neither food nor drink, nor bathing her sacred body, such grief had she at heart; and by night she carried in either hand a blazing torch, to light her on her way.

But when the tenth dawn was near, night-wandering Hecate met the wayfarer, herself bearing a flaming cresset, and she said, "Lady Demeter, Giver of mellow fruitfulness, who is he that hath brought this sorrow upon thee, bereaving thee of Persephone, light of thine eyes? For I heard her cry, sitting in my dim interlunar cave; but when I looked forth I saw her not, nor her ravisher."

"Would I knew his name," said Demeter, "that I might curse him with the curse of a desolate mother, but I know it not. These nine days I have wandered to and fro upon the earth and found none to tell me who hath stolen my child away."

"Come with me, Lady," said Hecate, "and I will bring you to one who saw that deed; for he beholds all that is done under the light of day."

Demeter answered never a word, but stretched forth her hand to Hecate; hand in hand they sped to the Gates of Morning, and stood before the chariot of bright Helios as he came forth to run his course. And Demeter prayed him, if ever word or act of hers had been pleasant to him, now to remember it, and tell her who had carried off Persephone.

Then said Hyperion's radiant child, "Daughter of fair-tressed Rhea, queenly Demeter, thou shalt know all; for my heart melts with ruth to behold thine affliction. Know, that Zeus and none other is the cause thereof, who hath given thy tender maiden for wife to his brother Pluto. But it was Pluto himself who seized her in the fair field of Enna, and bore her down into his gloomy realm,

what time she vainly cried on thee for succour. Yet, Goddess, since there is no remedy, cease to lament, and consider this for thy comfort; a high alliance hath Zeus devised for Persephone, espousing her to his born brother and thine. For when he made division of his empery, a third share fell to Pluto, even the vasty Underworld; there holds he royal state, Ruler supreme of the unnumbered Dead. Yea, mighty among gods is thy loved daughter's bridegroom."

So saying, Helios called to his bright steeds, urging them forward, and they bounded on rejoicing along the highway of azure heaven.

But Demeter wept the more bitterly at those tidings, for now she sorrowed without hope, knowing none of the gods would take her part against the strong Sons of Cronus. In bitter wrath against Zeus, she withdrew herself utterly from his courts and the glorious fellowship of the Olympians, and roamed solitary on earth, hiding her grief-darkened divinity under the semblance of a mortal.

Now when she had wandered long, the mourning Mother drew near to the little city of Eleusis, in the land of Attica; and being weary, she sat down to rest by a wayside well, under the shade of an ancient olive-tree. And the passers-by paid no heed to her sitting there; for they saw only a grey-haired woman, bent with age, clad in coarse, dark raiment. But at eventide, the four daughters of a chieftain came to the well to draw water, maidens gentle-hearted as they were fair; they looked with compassion on the tired wayfarer, and the eldest said

to her, "Who art thou, grey-haired stranger, and what dost thou abroad so late, when women of thy years are fain to sit at ease by their firesides?"

"Dear damsels," answered the goddess, "all hail to you, whosoe'er you be! Since you question so courteously, I willingly tell my name and unhappy story. I am called *Boon*; the far Isle of Crete was my homeland, but sea-roving pirates bore me away captive in their swift, black-prowed ship. And they would have sold me into slavery; but when they had brought their ship into the harbour of Thoricum, they fell to feasting and carousing with the women of the place, and while they were bemused with wine I fled away unseen. Ever since, I have wandered homeless, eating the bread of strangers in a strange land. Far be such a lot from you, sweet maids; but may the high Gods give you noble husbands and make you joyful mothers of children. And now, of your charity, my daughters, aid a poor lonely soul! Know you any householder in this place, man or matron, who will give me food and shelter in exchange for such menial service as fits a woman past her prime? If you can find me a master or mistress, believe me, they shall be well content with their servant; for though old, I am both hale and diligent, a thrifty steward of household stores, and well skilled to teach the younger handmaids the work of the loom. Or, if a nurse be needed, I know—none better—how to care for a tender babe."

At these words, the four maidens smiled at each other, and Callidicé the eldest made reply, "Good

dame, a hard lot is thine, but we mortals must bear patiently the yoke of the gods. Come, be of better cheer; for easily, I ween, we shall find thee a place of trust in some wealthy house, either with wise Triptolemus, or Diocles, or Eumolpus, or our own father, Celeus, who are all princes and chief men in our city. Nay, I dare pledge mine oath that not one of them would deny thee or turn thee away; for of a truth there is something godlike in thy look and mien. But if it please thee, tarry here awhile, and I will go to my mother, the Lady Metaneira, and tell her what has passed between us; it may be, she will bid thee house with us and seek no further. For she has one son, her darling, and he is yet a babe in arms; if she will but give thee the rearing of him, thou wilt earn enough to make thee rich for ever. Say, shall we ask her leave to bring thee home?"

Demeter bowed her head in token of consent; and the maidens, having filled their pitchers with water, went cityward glad at heart. Nor had she waited long when she saw them come tripping like lissom fawns along the wheel-worn road; their dainty broidered kirtles held high for better speed, their young faces all smiles beneath their crocus-garlands. Gaily they bade the goddess rise and follow them, for all was well; but she went in silence, sick at heart, her dark, heavy mantle trailing about her delicate feet.

So they passed through the little town, and came to the house of Celeus; through the open portico they went, and into the lofty hall, where Metaneira

sat, babe in arm, against the roof-tree in the midst. And the maidens ran to her, but Demeter halted in the doorway; and as she set foot on the threshold, a glory like clear flame blazed forth around her, and it seemed to the beholders that she towered suddenly to such height that her head touched the lintel. But in another instant the glory was gone, and they saw her as before, a bent and withered woman, meanly clad. Then Metaneira and her daughters and all her household were filled with fear and with great reverence towards the stranger, perceiving her to be no common guest, since the Gods had shown them a sign and a wonder at her coming. And to do her the more honour, the house-mistress had the best couch set for her near the hearth; all burnished silver it was, soft-cushioned, fit for a queens' reclining; but Demeter would not rest thereon.

Now Metaneira had a handmaid called Iambe, a merry wench and quick-witted, but over free of tongue. She, bolder than the rest, set a low wooden chair before Demeter and threw a white fleece over it. "Sit there, dame," said she, bluntly, "if silver couches are too fine for you. To tell you my mind, homely sheepskin sorts better with that dingy cloak of yours." Demeter sat down without a word, drawing her black wimple about her face; and for a while all kept silence around the mute, veiled goddess, for they saw that her grief was very great.

But now the evening meal was spread in the hall; and Iambe, bustling to and fro among her fellow-maids, must needs mock at this one for sloth and

that one for clumsy haste; mimicking so aptly the gait and gestures of each, and launching withal such an arrow-flight of pungent pleasantries, that even the mournful Demeter could not see and hear her without a smile. Nay, at one outrageous jest the goddess laughed aloud; she who had neither laughed nor smiled since the day of her grievous loss. Metaneira and her husband—for by this Celeus was come into the hall—were right glad to see their guest of better cheer; and they prayed her to share their supper, or drink at least a cup of wine with them. But Demeter said, "Kind hosts, it is not lawful for me to taste either savoury meats or the fruit of the vine, seeing I am under a vow of abstinence. Give me instead a posset of barley-meal and water, spiced with the herb marjoram." Then Metaneira hasted to mingle the posset with her own hands, and gave the bowl to Demeter; and she drank and was refreshed; but first she scattered a few drops upon the ground, making libation to the Powers of Earth, after the custom of pious mortals.

When she had drunk that draught, Metaneira took the bowl from her and said, "Hail, all hail, Lady, by no lower style I salute thee, for 'tis well seen thou art of noble birth and lineage; yea, thy countenance is even as a king's in its gracious majesty. Now, be thy sorrow what it may, it is sent of the gods; and what they send it behoves us mortals to take patiently, not repining overmuch. Comfort thyself, then, Lady, and since thou hast come under our roof, be well assured we will

let thee lack for nothing." With that, she took her sleeping babe from the cradle by the hearth, and held him out to Demeter, saying, "See now, thou shalt nurse my little son, my precious one, whom the gods gave to me all unhoped for when I had long ceased to pray for a manchild. Look, he is weakly and frail; if thou canst rear him for me and bring him to boyhood, thou shalt be envied among neighbour women for the rich nursing-fee I will bestow."

Demeter answered, "I give thee greeting for greeting, Lady of this house; may the gods pour blessings on thee and thine! As for me, I will gladly tend this little one at thy bidding; and not to him, I trow, shall hurt befall by charm, or spell, or overlooking of the evil eye, whereby witches blight many a babe through the nurse's want of wit. For I know potent antidotes to all baneful herbs, and a sure counter-charm against all sendings and overlookings." So saying, she took the babe from his well-pleased mother with her immortal hands, and sweetly he slept on, nestling in her deep, fragrant bosom.

From that hour the child, Demophoön by name, so throve and so grew in beauty and stature as never mortal babe before; and his parents were well content to leave him wholly in the wise nurse's keeping, since she desired it. And she nourished him not with milk of the breast, nor with bread of men, but like a child of the gods, feeding and anointing him secretly with divine ambrosia. But at dead of night the goddess would cast deep sleep

upon her nursling and thrust him among the embers of the hearth, as one might thrust a brand to burn, that so she might purge his tender flesh of earthly grossness. At last, one unlucky night, as Metaneira lay wakeful in her chamber, she saw through the open door Demeter bending over the hearth of the hall, and plunging the babe into the flames. Horror-stricken, the mother leaped from her couch, shrieking, "My child, my Demophoön! The stranger woman is murdering thee, out and alas!"

That cry roused Celeus, sleeping beside her, and together husband and wife rushed upon the stranger. But she, laying the tranced babe on the ground, turned and confronted them with so dread an aspect that they shrank back overawed. Anger blazed in her great eyes, and frowning she spoke, "Ah foolish, witless race of womankind, who cannot discern good luck from ill when it comes their way! Thy folly, Metaneira, must cost this child dear; for by the Water of implacable Styx I swear, I would have made him immortal and forever young hadst thou not broken my charm; but now he must die like other men. Natheless, glory and honour shall follow him all the days of his life, because he was reared in the lap of a goddess and cradled in arms divine. For behold, I that speak unto thee am Demeter, the Giver of Harvest, the beloved and blest of gods and men."

As she thus spoke, the stranger woman was transfigured before the eyes of her trembling hosts; her bowed form rose to stately height, her wrinkled visage took on lovely bloom, her hair fell in ripples,

yellow like corn, over her shoulders, divine fragrance streamed from her garments, and light above the brightness of the sun shone round about her, filling all the house with its splendour. Then Celeus and his wife were sore afraid, and fell down at the feet of the glorious goddess, entreating her to be gracious unto them. And she said, "Fear not, Celeus and Metaneira, for I am not unmindful of the kindness you have shown the stranger within your gates. No longer may I bide under this roof, but you shall build me a temple without the city, hard by the fair spring where your daughters found me; there will I dwell, enriching the folk of Eleusis with blessings manifold. Go, therefore, Celeus, and call together the chiefs of the people, that they may hear who is come among them, and build me a house with all speed. Tell them, moreover, that if they will serve me duly, I will make them priests of the sanctuary, and it shall be famous in all lands; for I will teach them and their children to celebrate holy mysteries, that shall cleanse guilty souls and be a light to them that walk in darkness, guiding their feet into the way of peace."

So saying, the goddess departed; but Celeus hied him to the princes of the folk, to Triptolemus and Diocles and Eumolpus, and told them all that had befallen, and the bidding of Demeter. And that same day the temple was builded, beside the well Callirhoë; for all the folk of Eleusis wrought zealously at that task, and Demeter gifted their hands with skill and strength beyond human.

But Metaneira, terror-stricken by that epiphany of

the goddess, remained awhile motionless and dumb on the threshold of her chamber, nor heeded when the babe awoke and began to cry lustily, lying where Demeter had set him down before the hearth. The household were still asleep—for it was not yet day when Celeus went forth to do her bidding—and heard not his wailing; but his sisters woke at the sound in their maiden bower; and they came hastily into the hall and saw their mother standing like a graven image, with fixed unseeing gaze, and the child shivering on the ground before the dying fire. Then the eldest sister ran to her and helped her, half-swooning, to a couch; the second blew upon the embers and cast on fresh wood, making a cheerful blaze; the two youngest took up little Demophoön and sought to soothe him with fond caresses, with sweet food and singing of lullabies. But loving and gentle as were his new nurses, the babe cried and fretted many days, pining for one who was more tender still.

Meanwhile Demeter sat brooding in the inmost chamber of the new-built temple, aloof from gods and men; the clinging warmth of baby arms had dulled for a season the hunger of her mother-heart, but now she was lonely once more, and as she thought on lost Persephone, grief and rage overwhelmed her like a rising tide. And in her sullen mood she withheld from men her wonted boon of the harvest; vain that year was the husbandman's toil, for the barley drooped and withered in the furrows or ever it was ripe for the sickle; and great dearth arose in every land, insomuch that Zeus

began to fear lest the whole race of men should perish of famine and his altars reek with sacrifice no more. Then he called to him bright-winged Iris, and bade her summon Demeter to his presence; and Iris brought his message to Demeter where she sat in her temple-chamber, mourning; but she answered never a word. Then he sent all the heaven-dwelling Olympians, one by one, on the same errand; and they sought to persuade Demeter by much entreaty and by promises of gifts and honours, whatever she desired, to return to the House of Zeus; but she answered one and all that never would she set foot therein, neither suffer the fields to bear harvest, until she had seen her daughter's loved face again.

When Zeus heard that, he bade Hermes of the Golden Wand, the divine Herald, fetch Persephone out of the dim House of Hades and restore her to her mother, since better might not be. Straightway Hermes put on his shining sandals that bear him like the wind over land and sea, and sped him down into the Underworld. And when he came into the House of Hades he found the dark King sitting upon his throne with Persephone beside him. Pale was the maiden's cheek, as the withered moon under the fresh beams of springing Dawn; sad and stern her brow, and the Sicilian flowers lay fading among her crownéd hair. Bright Hermes stood before them, waving his wand of office, and said, " Hades of the dusky locks, King of the Dead, my Father Zeus hath sent me to bring Lady Persephone back to upper air, that he may assuage

the bitter wrath of her mother against us Olympians. For Demeter is minded to destroy the whole race of mortal men by famine, unless her daughter is restored to her, and she hath made seed-time and harvest to cease in all the earth. Neither can any of the heaven-dwellers persuade her to return among us, but she hath shut herself within the temple the folk of Eleusis have builded for her, nursing wrath unappeasable."

Then Hades, grimly smiling, turned to his pale queen and said, "Arise, Persephone, and go to thy mother, lest her bitter anger for thy sake prove the bane of mortals and immortals. And do thou for thine own part cease to bear a grudge against me; bethinking thee thy spouse is not least among the gods, but brother to thine own mighty sire, and hath made thee Queen and Mistress of all living souls, for all come to thee at last. Yea, I have given thee dominion over all spirits of the departed, so that thou mayest doom to endless woe all such as have not duly sought thy mercy, honouring thee with holy rites and rich sacrifices in their earthly life."

Thus he spoke, and Queen Persephone, hearing, sprang up with joy in her heart, and would have gone forthwith out of his drear precincts with Hermes the Messenger. But her Lord, devising subtlety, bade her first eat with him, in token of reconcilement—for as yet the sorrowing maiden had never broken her fast in the place of her captivity. And when she pleaded haste, he said, "I will not delay thee, my Queen, until the feast

be spread in our hall; it shall suffice me if thou wilt but taste of the fruit of my garden, that I may know there is peace between me and thee." And Persephone consented, thinking no evil. But Hades knew that whoso tastes food or drink in the Underworld is bound to him for ever by the power of that sacrament. So he gathered a pomegranate in his garden, and gave it to the maiden; and when she had eaten of it, he harnessed his black steeds to his golden chariot, and set her thereon, and gave whip and reins into the hand of Hermes, that he might bring her with due pomp to her mother's dwelling. Then swiftly the immortal horses bore them through the wide ways of shadowy Hades up into the sunlit world; over hill and dale they bounded, and stinted not nor stayed until they halted before the temple-door in the plain of Eleusis. At the sound of the chariot-wheels Demeter came running from her chamber—one look, one cry, and mother and daughter were locked in each other's arms, weeping tears of joy. Kindly Hermes smiled, well-pleased to see it; he turned the dark steeds homeward again, and departed without a word, leaving those two to their new-found bliss.

So all day long they sat in happy converse, mingling tears and laughter and fond embraces; and Persephone told her mother how she was surprised and how dread Pluto carried her shrieking into the depths of earth, and all that had befallen her there. But at eventide, they saw one coming towards them through the dusk, bearing a lighted torch, and a veiled figure walked after, tall

and majestic. Persephone was afraid, and clung fast to Demeter, saying, "Hide me, mother, for I think it is Hecate the Witch-goddess who comes yonder, torch in hand, even she that waited on me in hall and bower, by command of my dread lord. Alas, I fear he hath sent her with that other whom I know not, to bring me back to him."

"Nay," said Demeter, "if it be Hecate, all is well, for she is our friend, and helped me to gain tidings of thee when none else would; be sure she comes not on Pluto's errrand."

So saying she arose to greet Hecate, bidding her welcome, and asking her whence she come. The Witch-goddess answered, "All hail to you, Demeter and fairest Persephone, Mother and Maiden! From high Zeus I come, O Lady of Bounty, guiding One who deigns at his entreaty to mediate between him and thee. For he knoweth thou wilt reverence her, though none else of the gods could melt thy stubborn mood."

With that, Hecate's tall follower drew back her shining wimple, and Demeter beheld the face of great Rhea, her Mother, in its majesty sublime. And Rhea embraced her, kissing her on the brow, and said, "My daughter, it is long since we have met, for I dwell in a land that is very far off, in the untrodden mountain-glades of Phrygia. Thence am I come this day, desiring to reconcile thee with Zeus thy brother and the rest of the Olympians, lest the feud that is between ye breed evils without end both in earth and heaven. Hear then, my child, what thy brother promises by my mouth;

consider it well, for he is thy King and Lord, not lightly to be denied or set at nought. If thou wilt make peace with him and renew thy bounty to men, he will grant thee whatsoever meed of honour thou desirest, and Persephone shall abide with thee forever—if only she have not tasted food while she sojourned in the House of Hades. But if she hath eaten so much as one morsel, then Hades hath power over her by a law that cannot be broken, and for a third of every year she must dwell with him below."

Then Demeter spoke low to Persephone, "Did any besides thy husband see thee eat of his pomegranate?"

"No, my mother," answered she, "we were alone in his orchard close when he plucked the fruit and gave it me and I did eat."

"That is well, sweetheart," said Demeter; "when Zeus questions thee, thou must deny that thou hast broken fast—for what are a few pomegranate seeds? and grim Hades will not be able to disprove thy word, lacking a witness."

Smilingly then she spoke to Rhea, "Queen, Mother of us all, as thou sayest so let it be. Come, let us return forthwith to the golden House of Zeus."

So the four goddesses went forth into the night, and Hecate led the way, torch in hand. But as they passed by the Fount Callirhoë, a shrill, mocking voice came to them out of the olive-tree nigh at hand, "*I bear witness! I bear witness! Persephone hath eaten of the fruit of Hades.*" And suddenly

an eldritch figure hovered before them in the glare of the torchlight, at sight of whom Persephone shrank back, crying, "It is Ascalaphus, Pluto's henchman! Alas, and he hath spied upon me, lurking among the trees of the garden."

"That did I," said the goblin, with a chuckling laugh, "and here I come to bear witness for my master, like a trusty servant. Ho, ho, sweet maiden, thou art one of us, maugre thy mother, since thou hast tasted our fare!"

"Thou misbegotten imp of darkness," said Demeter wrathfully, "for the mischief thou hast done me I will stop thy blabbing tongue for ever. Quit that form thou hast, vile wretch, and take that of a screech-owl; and be henceforth accursed of all men as a bird of ill-omen, whose hideous note bodes them disaster and death."

So saying, the goddess dipped her hand in the water of the Fount and sprinkled a few drops over Ascalaphus; and as she did so he was changed into a blinking owl, that flapped heavily away out of the torchlight and vanished among the trees with a weird, discordant wail.

But since Heaven and Earth had heard the witness of Ascalaphus, Demeter knew she must let Persephone return into the Underworld for the third of every year, according to her promise to Rhea. Howbeit she put away her anger, taking comfort in the thought that she might keep her darling through the sweet days of summer and the happy harvest-time. So they went their way with the august Mother of the Gods into the courts of

Zeus, where he and all the Olympians received them joyfully; then were he and Demeter reconciled, and he gave her gifts of honour—a golden house to dwell in and a golden chariot with white, immortal steeds—that she might abide henceforth among her kindred, and go in and out before them in queenly state. And to Persephone Zeus gave a distaff of pure gold, which is the mark of honour he bestows on his own maiden daughters. So that night the Mother and the Maiden sat together at the feast of Zeus, and there was mirth and joy in heaven.

But when morning was come, the two goddesses went down to earth in their golden car, and entered the city of Eleusis; and Demeter called unto her the princes of the folk, Celeus and Diocles and Eumolpus and the wise youth Triptolemus, bidding them follow her into the fields. And they followed, marvelling; but far greater their wonder when they looked on the fields that yesterday lay bare, for behold, all the furrows stood thick with corn, white unto harvest, and all the pastures were deep in dewy grass. Then said the bounteous goddess, "Men of Eleusis, put in your sickles and reap, and drive out your starving cattle into the pastures; and fear famine no more, for I have put away sorrow and wrath, neither will I any more afflict the earth, but seed-time and fruit-time shall not fail henceforth for ever. And whereas men have tilled their lands hitherto with mattocks and hoes, I will show wise Triptolemus how to frame a better implement of husbandry, which shall make his name renowned among mortals. Yea, while earth endures

the folk of every land shall have cause to bless him, because through him came to them my great gift —the Plough. But as for the greater gift I have already promised, follow me now into the temple you builded, and make fast the doors; for I will impart to you in secret the holy rites that you are to celebrate in remembrance of the Mourning Mother and of her Child's resurrection from the Dead."

Now when Demeter had revealed these things to her chosen servants, she returned with Persephone into the heavenly mansions, and they saw her no more; but all her word was fulfilled to the folk of Eleusis in the after time. And as poets and sages bore record, there was no divine ordinance or sacred rite in ancient Hellas that brought such ample measure of blessing on those admitted to share it as the Eleusinian Mysteries of the Two Goddesses.

As for Demeter, though yearly, as dark winter draws near, the child she loves so well must pass with reluctant feet into the world of shadows, to wear her asphodel crown and sit enthroned beside her gloomy Lord; yet the Mother weeps no more, but waits in hope and patience, for she knows Persephone will come back to her with the coming of the flowers.

CHAPTER VI

ATHENA

"Bloodless are her works, and sweet
All the ways that feel her feet;
From the empire of her eyes
Light takes life and darkness flies;
From the harvest of her hands
Wealth strikes root in prosperous lands;
Wisdom of her word is made;
At her strength is strength afraid;
From the beam of her bright spear
War's fleet foot goes back for fear."

Erechtheus.

On the day when Zeus made division of his new-won empire among the rest of the Immortals, he assigned to each of them by lot some land or city of Earth, to have and to hold for ever under his suzerainty. But Helios the Sun-God was not present at the drawing of the lots to which all had been summoned, for not even at the behest of Zeus might he pause or turn upon his daily course; and, none remembering him, he was left portionless. So, when he had stabled his bright steeds within the Gates of the Sunset, beyond Ocean's Western bourne, Helios betook him to the celestial halls, and Zeus and all the Olympians were grieved at heart as they beheld him, because they had forgotten that pure and holy god, the eternal Witness in Heaven, the Giver of Light and Life to mortal men.

And straightway Zeus would have cast lots again; but Helios said, "Nay, son of Cronus, hearken rather to me. As I journey day by day in my flaming car, I have looked from highest heaven far down into the sea, and beheld a lovely isle, green as emerald, growing upward through the waters as it were a burgeoning plant, from its root in the bed of the deep. This and none other land I would have, to set my name there. Now, therefore, Lord of all, bid the Sister Fates—if it seem good to them—confirm to me by an oath possession of that isle, from the day it arises out of the waves to the end of Time."

Then Zeus called the Three Fates before his throne and told them the request of Helios. And those veiled Sisters answered with one voice, "It shall be so; we will swear it by the Water of Styx, the oath that binds all the ever-living gods." Straightway Zeus sent bright-winged Iris speeding down into the Underworld, to bring some of that Water; and she brought it in the cup that Styx herself gave her, which was neither of gold nor silver nor any precious ware, but hollowed out of an ass's hoof. For such is the deadly potency of the Loathly Water that it shivers to pieces all other vessels whatsoever, nor can hardest iron contain it; but the hoof of an ass will hold it, because that creature, the despised drudge of men, has been gifted by Earth with mystic powers above all her dumb children. One by one, the Three Fates took the cup in hand, and pronounced the inviolable oath, and when the Third Sister had spoken, she poured

the water on the ground, as the manner was in that solemn rite, whereby the gods pledged their faith one to another.

And then the Olympians would fain learn from the Sisters what had brought to pass this marvel, that a new isle should arise out of the bosom of the sea. Clotho, the First Sister, held her peace, for she was busied in winding fleecy wool about her golden distaff; Atropos, the Third Sister, was likewise silent, for she was gazing on the threads, which were lives of men, that Lachesis, the Second Sister, was spinning, and awaiting the moment to cut them off with her gleaming shears. But Lachesis answered them as she twirled her spindle, "Sky-Children, the land that Helios has seen and chosen for his own has felt of yore his life-giving beams, though it has long lain fathoms deep in brine. For it is the island once inhabited by the Telchines, that race of wicked and powerful sorcerers, whom for the evil that they wrought by their enchantments while Cronus was king, he destroyed root and branch; making the deep to boil like a cauldron, and the foundations of the isle to melt, so that it sank with them beneath the raging floods. But the hour is at hand when it shall appear again in all its beauty, a land of tilth and pasture, olive-yards and vineyards, and above all of gardens, where the Flower of flowers shall reign."

Now Poseidon the Earth-Shaker had by golden Aphrodite a daughter named Rhodos, which means "Rose" in the language spoken by the gods in heaven and the Greeks on earth, and her dewy

bloom was sweeter than the flower's whose name she bore. From her father's sea-palace of Aegae, Rhodos would oftentimes visit the sunken isle, that lay like a flowery oasis amid the wreck-strewn deserts under the main; the crimson roses that she found in its wild-briar coverts seemed to the Sea-nymph more wonderful than all the strange pale blossoms of her own garden, and by her faëry tendance they flourished still in the dim, green water-world. And Rhodos loved them so well that when the isle emerged at last into the sunny air, she would not leave them, but forsook Aegae's halls for ever to dwell in the pleachéd bower she had woven for herself with their twining odorous boughs. There, in the purple summer dusk, Helios found her sleeping, Queen Rose among her roses, and awoke her with a kiss; nor turned she from that divine lover's pleading; and that night saw her maiden-bower made her bridal-chamber. The Sun-God named his chosen Isle after the name of his bride, and granted her for marriage-gift that it should always bear the sweetest roses in all the world. So that Isle is called Rhodes unto this day.

Seven sons were born to Helios and Rhodos, who grew up valiant and mighty princes, founders of cities famed in the after time. While these were yet youths, Helios called them to him one day and said, "My sons, a prophecy goes abroad in heaven that a new Immortal will shortly be born into the world, a child of Zeus, excelling all gods but him in wisdom and strength. Take heed, when you shall hear tidings that this is come to pass, that you

straightway build an altar, high and far-seen, to the newborn Olympian, and offer a rich burnt-sacrifice thereon; so shall you win favour with the great Father and his Child, as the first to render the homage due; and they will bless this land above all lands for your sakes."

Now not many days after, as Zeus sat on the throne of his glory, revolving high purposes in his prescient mind, behold, fierce pangs smote through his brain, insomuch that he shuddered and groaned aloud. At that awful sound, the Olympians gathered trembling about their King; and pale grew every cheek as they marked the dews of agony starting from his sacred, ambrosial brows—his countenance, that sun of majesty ineffable, now darkened with horror and huge pain. Hephaestus stood gazing with the rest, his craftsman's axe in hand; and to him Zeus cried suddenly, "Take thine axe, Halt-foot, and cleave open my head, for I feel within it as it were a living thing, that struggles to break forth." Then Hephaestus heaved the axe aloft and smote Zeus on the crown of the head, and from the cleft he made sprang up the towering figure of a Maiden, resplendent in full armour, brandishing a great, glittering spear! Lightly leaped she down among the astonied gods, and there withal she uttered her voice as it were the voice of an army shouting the battle-shout. And the heavens trembled at the cry of her, and Earth, Mother of All. Thus came she into the world, the strong Daughter of Zeus, born of his teeming brain; and at first the gods called her Pallas, that is, the

"Brandisher," because she appeared among them shaking in warrior fashion her invincible lance. But the Fates gave her the name of ATHENA; and what that name means is known to the Immortals only.

Rumours of that wondrous birth flew over land and sea on the wings of all the winds; and the sons of Helios no sooner heard the tidings than they hasted to build a high altar on a hill-top that was their citadel, and brought thither the choicest first fruits of their Isle, that they might offer sacrifice to the new Goddess according to their father's commandment. But even as may befall men of goodwill, who are fain to take for their guide Reverence, the daughter of Forethought, yet stray from the path she leads them in because their minds are clouded by forgetfulness; so it was with these seven princes. For having laid their offerings on the altar, they found that none among them had remembered to bring fire from the hearth of his home, wherewith to kindle the sacrifice; and they left it unconsumed upon the altar and went their way. Thus their sacrifice was of none effect; for fireless rites are acceptable only to the Powers below, and the Olympians can be propitiated by burnt-offerings alone, whereof the sweet savour ascends to them, mingled with incense-fumes from their blazing altars. Meanwhile, the folk of a little city in the land of Greece, hearing likewise the great tidings, were the first to honour Athena with burnt-sacrifice, being then and thereafter the most pious of all nations under heaven; and how she repaid

them shall presently be told. Howbeit, the good intent of the sons of Helios did not lose its reward; for Zeus overshadowed their Isle with an amber cloud that dissolved in showers of snow—and those snowflakes were flakes of gold. And to his gift of untold wealth Athena added a gift that is her own, for she appeared to the Seven Princes, fair and terrible in her dazzling panoply, and said to them, "Behold, wisdom is mine exceeding the wisdom of all gods save Zeus only, because I am sprung from his brain; wherefore my Father has made me Queen and Mistress of the arts of war, and government, and all life-fostering crafts, and given me dominion over the work of men's hands. Now, for the pious intent you had towards me, I will bestow on you and your children after you such skill in handicrafts that the works of the Rhodians shall be the wonders of the world." Now as the Goddess promised, so it came to pass; in all the ancient ages there were nowhere shipwrights, potters, goldsmiths, and silversmiths, to compare with those of the Sun-God's Isle. But as statuaries above all was the fame of the Rhodians bruited abroad in every land; for in their streets were to be seen images of men, beasts, and creeping things, molten or graven, wrought with such mastery that they seemed to live and move. Thus by pure and god-given skill did the children of Helios achieve marvels beyond all that the old, wicked race of the Telchines had wrought in the Isle of the Rose by unhallowed magic.

Now Athena was fain to take for her own some

city of men after the manner of other gods, that she might set her name there, and make it renowned in all the Earth as the place where her honour dwelt. And she chose the little city in the land of Attica, in Greece, that had been first and foremost to render her the worship due to an Olympian. This city was called Cranae, that is, *the Craggy*, for it was builded on the top of a great altar-shaped crag, that rose out of the Attic plain. Other rocky hills stood grouped about Cranae, but from its ramparts the burghers had clear prospect across the plain to the sea, some four miles distant. Beautiful for situation, blessed with an air so crystal-pure that to breathe it dispels all gross vapours from blood and brain, making the heart light and the wits nimble, Cranae was yet a poor and petty township lacking wealth in flocks, herds, and crops, by reason of the dry, barren soil of the countryside. The king of it, whose name was Cecrops, was likewise its founder, having gathered a folk unto him from among the earliest dwellers in the land. Now this Cecrops was without father or mother, for he sprang from the soil; and like certain others of the primeval Earth-born race, his form was not wholly human, but from the middle downwards was that of a Snake.

To this city and its king came great Athena, with proffer of much blessing to the folk of Cranae if they would worship her as their Guardian Goddess. But hitherto they had honoured Poseidon above all gods, and he no sooner heard of Athena's coming than he appeared also in Cranae, and withstood her to the face, as a trespasser on his ancient precincts.

The two Olympians met in the little market-place, where Cecrops and the Elders of the folk had gathered to receive Athena; and dread chilled the mortal onlookers as they watched the frowning faces of those mighty disputants. "Wherefore art thou come hither, Daughter of Zeus?" began Poseidon, tossing back his dusky locks; "knowest thou not that this city is mine from of old? If thou dost not, mark yonder altar—its stones are blackened with the smoke of sacrifices offered to Poseidon the Earth-Shaker long ere there was yet talk among gods or men of such an one as Pallas Athena." So saying, the wrathful god pointed to his low, time-worn altar in the midst of the market-place.

But Athena, laying her hand on the new-built altar by which she stood, answered nothing daunted, "Mark thou rather *my* altar, proud son of Cronus; for I tell thee, it shall blaze heaven-high with hecatombs of sheep and oxen long after thine burns faintly, because Poseidon's worshippers are few—in Athena's town!"

"Insolent upstart!" furiously retorted Poseidon, "presume not too far on being daughter to my Brother, or I shall teach thee by sharp lessoning how little thy masquerade of Warrior can bestead one of female mould."

Athena's grey-green eyes flashed emerald lightnings as she answered, "Make good that boast, valiant kinsman! Come, let us prove which is the stronger—the Sea-God's Trident or the Spear of Pallas."

With that, the twain addressed themselves to

combat; and now had crag-built Cranae been laid in ruins by the shock of their dire encounter, had not Zeus spoken in thunder from on high, commanding them to forbear. And he sent down bright-winged Iris to bid them dispute no more for possession of Cranae, but submit their claims to the arbitrament of King Cecrops. Nor durst they disobey; but placed Cecrops forthwith on his royal judgment-seat, between the two altars, and each in turn pleaded their rights before him. Poseidon urged that Cranae was his by right of the first comer; Athena, that such title to possession had often been set aside by right of the stronger, as witness the seats and sanctuaries of the Titanian gods now held by the Olympians; furthermore, she asserted a peculiar claim to the city where she had first been invoked with the full rites belonging to an Olympian goddess.

When both had spoken, Cecrops conferred apart with the Elders of the people, who were wont to be the king's councillors and co-assessors in the meting of justice. Then said he, "Since by the will of Zeus I, a mortal, am made sole arbiter of this high cause, it behoves me to decide as shall best serve the welfare of my people that is under me. For who am I to know the laws that govern Immortals in their dealings one with another? Only this is manifest, that their tenure of cities and shrines is rather by Might than by any Right known to mortals. Wherefore, O Earth-shaking God, and divine Warrior-Maid, I desire from each of you a token of the power that is in you, that I may

know which will be the better guardian of this my city."

"It is well spoken, Cecrops," cried Poseidon, "behold now a token of the power I have to flood the lands of your neighbours, if they prove foes, with my sea-billows." He said, and struck the ground under his feet with his bright Trident; and straightway a spring of salt water gushed forth out of the rock. And the cleft thus made took the form of a round well-head, wherein blue wavelets danced and sparkled like a tiny, fairy sea, on the level summit of Cranae's hill. Then were Cecrops and his men filled with wonder; but Athena said, "Wise and prudent king, Poseidon hath shown thee that he is mighty to destroy; but look now on *my* token, and learn that in me Cranae may have a Guardian more careful for her prosperity than for the ruin of her neighbours, which can profit her little or nothing." So saying, the Goddess traced certain characters on the ground beside her altar with the point of her spear; and in the twinkling of an eye there sprang up a goodly Tree, with narrow grey-green leaves, and laden on every bough with black and glossy berries, each of the bigness of a grape, but oblong in form. This seemed to the mortal beholders a stranger marvel than the other; and no such Tree had they or any man seen before, for it was the First Olive.

"Consider this Tree, Cecrops," said the Goddess, smiling upon him; "there are many fairer and more pleasant to the eye, but none more to be desired of the husbandman. Her berries are good for food,

and rich in sweet oil that has manifold uses—to knead his corn-meal into cakes; to make his face to shine, and balsam his body against scorching sun or nipping frost; to give him light, clear and steady, from his clay lamp, instead of tallow's sooty flare. Verily, the man whose croft is well stocked with such trees will need no other wealth than they bring him. Hear now, King and burghers of Cranae! If ye will have Athena for your Goddess, Athena's Tree, the Olive, shall flourish in your land more abundantly than on any spot of Earth; its fruit shall be your riches, and its fadeless leaf your glory. And while this my token stands within your citadel, I, in whom is the spirit of counsel and might, will never fail you or forsake you." Then Cecrops answered, and his men after him, "So be it, Queen Athena! Thou shalt be our Goddess and we will be thy people."

Great wrath had Poseidon when he heard that saying, but for fear of Zeus he must needs abide by it, and so departed sullenly to his palace beneath the waves. And while his anger was yet hot against the folk of Cranae, he caused the sea to rise and flood their plain; but when they cried unto Athena, she prevailed with Zeus to send forth strong Boreas, the North Wind, who rolled back the waters with the breath of his mouth. Howbeit, Poseidon kept not his anger long; for like the sea he rules, his mood changes quickly from storm to calm; and though none among the gods is more prone to sudden rage, he is more loved than feared by the rest, because he was never known to bear

malice after his passion cooled. So after a while Athena easily made her peace with him by promising, under solemn oath, that he should be worshipped in her city with honours only less than her own.

From this time onward the men of Cranae called their rock-built townlet after the name of their Goddess. Little dreamt those simple, primitive folk, shepherds and tillers of the soil, who first uttered the word ΑΘΗΝΑΙ—Athena's town—of all that word should come to stand for among generations yet unborn; little they guessed themselves the earliest citizens of the most glorious city this world should ever see—

> "A light upon earth as the sun's own flame,
> A name as his name,
> Athens, a praise without end."

CHAPTER VII

APOLLO

"For thy kingdom is past not away,
Nor thy power from the place thereof hurled;
Out of heaven they shall cast not the day,
They shall cast not out song from the world.
By the song and the light that they give
We know thy works that they live;
With the gift thou hast given us of speech
We praise, we adore, we beseech,
We arise at thy bidding and follow,
We cry to thee, answer, appear,
O father of all of us, Paian, Apollo,
Destroyer and healer, hear!"

The Last Oracle.

Of Apollo is the tale we tell, the Archer, Delian and Pythian, at whose coming through Heaven like a bright and morning star the gods with one mind rise up for reverence. Yea, when his step is heard upon the threshold of the hall of Zeus, the Olympians start up one and all from beside their nectar, and make way, not without awe, as he approaches with the gleaming Bow bent in his hand. Two only await him tranquilly—his Father throned above all, and the Mother that bore him, Leto the gentle-hearted, the ever-gracious. Straight to her strides golden-haired Apollo, where she sits beside Zeus the Thunderer; and Leto with her soft hands slackens for him the bow-string, and shuts the lid of his

bright quiver; and she hangs his bow on a golden nail in the roof-tree of the hall. Then she leads her beloved son to his place at the right hand of his Father, who greets him well pleased, reaching forth to him his golden cup brimming with sacred nectar. Not till then do the rest of the Olympians sit them down again to the banquet; and the heart of Leto rejoices, as she beholds the honours paid to her child. And truly, blessed is she above all goddesses in bearing of glorious children, being Mother to Apollo of the Silver Bow and to Artemis the Huntress—those Twins divine whom she brought forth on the sea-girt rocks of Delos.

For it came to pass, when fair Leto was with child by the secret embraces of Zeus, that she durst not abide in the golden houses of heaven for fear of white-armed, ox-eyed Lady Hera; and she wandered on earth, seeking a place of shelter where she might bring forth her offspring unespied of that jealous Queen. To many lands and peoples came the gentle goddess—to the dwellers by Thracian Athos, and by forest-clad Pelion, to Euboea and Athens, and Aegina; thence to famous Crete, and the rich Isles of Lesbos, Samos, Chios, and all the island and seaboard cities of the wide Aegean. But she could find no land or city willing to be the birth-place and home of her child; for they were all afraid, because of a prophecy noised abroad that a most mighty god should be born on earth ere long, a son of Zeus. At last in her journeying Leto came to a small rocky isle in the midst of the seas, where no man dwelt, for it was barren and waterless;

there, very wearied, she sat down to rest under the shade of a palm-tree. And with a deep sigh she said, "Ah, little isle of the sea, would that thou, even thou, wert willing to be the home of the son I shall bear, and the place of his glorious sanctuary! None else of the gods, I ween, will choose thee for his own, O wave-beat Rock, nor bring thee to honour; nor canst thou look to be rich in flocks and herds, or beautiful with corn, olives, and vines; but if my son, Phoebus Apollo, should be born here and make his abode with thee, all men will throng hither to do him service, and thou wilt have surpassing wealth from the countless offerings in his temple. For Zeus hath revealed to me all his purpose concerning him; and I know Apollo is to excel all other gods in beauty, wisdom, strength, and glory, save only his all-ruling Sire."

When Leto had thus spoken, a voice greeted her by name; she lifted up her eyes, and looked, and behold one stood before her like a Nymph of the sea. And the Nymph said, "O Leto of the gentle heart, daughter of mighty Coeus, I am Delos the sea-born; mine is this islet, and it is called after my name. Now, having heard thy words, I am full fain that Apollo should be born in my land, whereby Delos shall be as honoured among men as heretofore despised and cried down. But one thing, Lady, fills me with misgiving, and I will tell thee what it is. There is rumour everywhere that the strong God born of thee will be arrogant exceedingly, ruling with a high hand over Immortals and dwellers upon earth. Wherefore my heart mis-

gives me sorely that when he comes to the light he will think utter scorn of my bare, rugged islet, and spurning it with his foot, whelm it fathoms deep under the waves. And then thy Apollo will fare to some pleasant land to set his name there and rear himself a temple and shady grove; but over me the great billows will wash evermore; the sea-urchins will have their nests and the black seals their lairs on Delos, where never foot of man shall tread to make them afraid. But if thou, Goddess dear, wouldst give me assurance by a solemn oath that in this place and no other Apollo shall first build him a fair, hallowed shrine for the resort of men——"

"For that I will be surety, kindly Nymph," broke in Leto, eagerly; and with uplifted hand she took the solemn oath, saying, "Bear me witness, O Earth, and spacious Heaven above us, and thou, sheer-falling Water of Styx, that art an oath most dread to all the blessed gods! I say there shall ever be in this isle a precinct and incense-laden altar of Apollo, and thee, O Delos, shall he honour above all lands."

Then Delos rejoiced greatly that her King to be was come unto her, and she tended the weary Leto like a trusty and skilful handmaiden. But in that same hour was Leto taken with pangs of travail; and forthwith all the high goddesses came to give her aid—Themis and Rhea, and Poseidon's Queen, deep-voiced Amphitrite, and revered Dione, she that hath worship in wintry Dodona as Spouse of Zeus; with these came many more, for all the

goddesses held sweet Leto dear, save only Queen Hera, and she kept aloof in her palace halls. But her daughter Eilithuia, the Helper in Childbirth, alone of Immortals had not heard tidings of Leto's plight; for Hera had sent her apart to the cloud-curtained top of Olympus when she knew Leto's full time was near to be delivered. And while she sate there, tabernacled in golden clouds, Leto brought forth without her help a maiden babe, beautiful as the day—Artemis, Queen and Huntress; yet therewithal the goddess was eased of but half her burden, and now fiercer throes took hold upon her for nine nights and days. When the rest of the goddesses saw they could avail nothing, they bade bright-winged Iris seek out Eilithuia, unknown to angry Hera, and promise her a great amber-studded carcanet of gold, nine cubits long, if she would come to Leto's aid. Swifter than the wind Iris sped upon their errand, and persuaded Eilithuia, and they two came hand in hand to Delos, cleaving the air in flight like the flight of wood-pigeons.

Soon as Eilithuia the Helper stood beside her was Leto's sore travail accomplished. For she kneeled upon the earth, and cast her fair arms about the palm-tree that overshadowed her; and forthwith leaped to light her strong-limbed son. Then did the rejoicing goddesses uplift their voices in the shout that wards off evil from the newly born; and suddenly all the rocky islet bloomed thick with golden flowers, from the mountain-ridge hight Cynthus down to the sea-marge; and a pool of water, round and clear as a mirror, shone forth

from the dry ground, hard by the palm tree. In that pure limpid lake the goddesses bathed the mighty Babe; they wrapped him in white swaddling bands of finest texture, fresh from the loom, and twisted a golden girdle over all. And his mother suckled not the new-born king; but great Themis held to his immortal lips nectar and honied ambrosia, giving him foretaste of the fare that should ever nourish and renew his youth divine.

But Apollo had no sooner eaten of the celestial food than he felt strength in every limb, and struggled, panting, to get free of his swaddling-bands, and burst them asunder, golden girdle and all. Then, while the goddesses beheld and marvelled, the Babe stood upright and walked erect; and he cried with a great voice, "This is I, Phoebus Apollo! Mine shall be the Lyre and the curving Bow; and I shall reveal unto men the sure purposes of Zeus." Thus he spake, prophesying of his glory, and straightway went ranging over the crags of Cynthus, and over the laughing waves; to all the islands and beakéd promontories he roved, to mountains and seaward-rolling rivers, and cities of men; and that day there was joy in all the earth because Apollo was born, a Light to lighten mortals.

Many a stately fane, many a grove of fair, spreading trees were his in the after time on the Aegæan isles and headlands; but his temple in Delos is the habitation dearest to his heart and the place where his honour dwelleth, according to Leto's word. There the trailing-robed Ionians gather to Apollo's

festival from their island and mainland cities, with their children and wedded wives; and hold in his honour splendid contests of boxers, dancers, and minstrels. Could you look on that pious folk as they keep holiday, you would deem them a race immortal, ever young; so beautiful are they all, men and fair-girdled women, a sight to rejoice the heart. But the crowning marvel of the Feast is the dance of the Delian virgins, Apollo's handmaids; for first, circling around his altar, they hymn the Far-darting God, then Leto and queenly Artemis; then, as they tread a mazy measure, they sing the deeds of famous men and women departed, mimicking to the life the voice, gait, and gestures of each. For they can speak with the tongues of all peoples under heaven; so perfectly, that each man hearing them, whatever countryman he be, might fancy he was listening to his own voice.

How Apollo came to Delphi

Now while the son of Leto was as yet a child, she would not bring him to his Father's house, dreading Queen Hera's malice; and by the will of Zeus he dwelt in the mountain glens of Pieria, haunt of the Muses. There the immortal Nine taught him all their lore and the art of lovely song; until of their playmate and pupil Apollo became their master, a sweeter singer than them all, and leader of their choir. But not yet possessed he the Lyre whereof he prophesied, for that was Hermes' gift to him long after; but already he was a mighty Archer, having

devised and fashioned for himself the Silver Bow and unerring Shafts that are his pride. With these the little god waged war on the beasts of prey—the lion and the fierce mountain-pard, and above all on the grim wolf, the shepherd's most dreaded foe. For he was a lover of flocks and herds, and himself owned fifty milk-white kine and a noble black bull of the wondrous breed that no mortal possesses, but the gods only.

But when Phoebus Apollo was come to the prime of his strength and the fulness of that youthful bloom which he wears eternally, then he sped unsummoned to the blissful House of Zeus, and the Olympians were astonied at the sight of him and the great gleaming Bow that was in his hand. Before his Father's throne he stood in his beauty, with golden, unshorn hair floating to his white shoulders, and claimed for himself a place and portion among the heaven-dwelling gods. Zeus heard him with a smile and answered graciously, "Strong Son of mine, in whom I am well pleased, already hast thou gotten thyself no mean honour from gods and men, seeing thou art Lord of that great Bow and those keen, glittering shafts. Be these thy portion for ever, Archer King, and be thine arrows winged henceforth with pestilence and sudden death; so shalt thou be rightly named Apollo, that is, *Destroyer*. But I will add yet greater honours unto thee; for thou shalt be Lord not of Death only, but of Healing and Life; and men shall call on thee by the name of *Paian*, the Healer, mighty to save. Moreover, I will make

thee my Prophet and Interpreter unto mortals, and they shall inquire of thee concerning my will and concerning things to come."

Then all the Olympians gave Apollo loving greeting for his sweet Mother's sake—all save Hera the Queen, and even she bade him welcome, shunning a quarrel with the stronger. But after he had dwelt awhile with the gods above, desire took hold on him to win lordship and tribute in the lands of Greece, that as yet knew him not; and thither he fared, seeking some pleasant place to be the seat of his oracle.

Now the god came first to Pieria, home of his childhood; thence he journeyed to Iolcus, the harbour-town, whose folk were venturous mariners from the beginning; thence to island Euboea and the fruitful Lelantine Plain. But in none of these was he minded to rear his temple. And crossing again to the mainland, over the Strait of Euripus, Apollo took his way past Mycalessus and fair-lawned Teumessus, to the valley where sacred, seven-gated Thebes stood in the after time. But as yet no city or dwelling of men was there, and dense, pathless forest covered all the region round. So Apollo went further, and came to famed Onchestus, where Poseidon hath his altar in a grove of noble trees, and a level course is marked out hard by, for the chariot-races that are held in his honour. And passing by that ancient, hallowed precinct, he forded the river Cephissus, and reached the deep-grassed meadows of Haliartus. There he saw a spring of clear, cold water gushing out from beneath

a great rock—a pleasant sight to the wayfarer, for it was now high noon of a midsummer day. In the cool shadow of the rock, a damsel lay on the mossy greensward, half asleep; and Apollo knew her for Telphussa, the Nymph of the Spring. He looked with delight on the fair and peaceful scene, and said in his heart, "Here is the place that I have been seeking."

And with that Apollo called to the Nymph, and she rose up to greet him. Then said he, "O Telphussa, here beside the Spring I am purposed to build me an house, a temple goodly and great, whereunto men may resort to inquire of my holy oracle. Hither they shall throng from far and near—dwellers in rich Peloponnesus, and wide Europe, and the Isles of the main—bringing me full tale of hecatombs, that I may give them true bodements out of my splendid shrine." And forthwith he marked out the ground plan of his temple, tracing an enclosure broad and long.

Now Telphussa was filled with anger at the sight, but she restrained herself, and said to him, "O Phoebus, Far-darting King, since thou art minded to build thy temple here, I have a word for thee worth thy heeding. This spring of mine is not far off Onchestus, and the charioteers in the races of Poseidon come hither by scores to water their horses and their mules; and neither peace nor quiet wilt thou have, dwelling here, but be harassed continually by tramping of hoofs and clatter of chariot-wheels. And many of thy pilgrims, belike, will take more delight in viewing the contests of

splendid chariot-teams than in viewing thy temple, be it never so great and sumptuous. So they will turn aside from Apollo's sanctuary and go instead to honour Poseidon the Earth-Shaker, Tamer of the Steed. But if thou wilt take my counsel—although I am weak, and thou art a mighty King, and must do as seemeth thee good—thou wilt build thy temple in Crissa, among the glens of Parnassus. For there no bruit of contests or din of chariots will vex thine ears; thither the tribes of men will go up in peace, bringing their gifts to saviour Paian; and thine heart shall be gladdened with the rich sacrifices of the neighbouring folk."

Thus spoke the wily Nymph, with intent that she alone might have honour and worship in that place, as aforetime; but the young god took her counsel, nothing doubting, and went his way, for not yet were all hearts open to his ken. And his road brought him next to wealthy Orchomenus, city of the Phlegyans, that possess the lands about the great Cephissian Mere. A haughty folk are they, fearing not man neither regarding Zeus. From thence Apollo sped onwards into the hill-country, and at even he stood within the long glen of Crissa, on the flank of huge, snow-crowned Parnassus. At the glen's head, facing the West, a sheer wall of rock, crescent-shaped, flashed back the rays of sunset; and from a cleft midway in the precipice, a torrent fell like a stream of molten silver, and went thundering down the gorge. Solemn was the place, remote, untrod, and it pleased Apollo's heart. "Here," said he, "will I build

me a glorious dwelling, and give responses to mortals from my oracular throne." So saying, he marked out foundations, broad and long, on the slopes of the ravine.

Now, though he knew it not, Crissa was already the seat of an Oracle, and that the most ancient in the world. For in the beginning, Earth herself had been wont to utter prophecies there, sending forth her deep-murmuring voice from a darksome grot. But when Zeus put away wise Themis, daughter of Earth, and made Hera his Queen in her stead, Earth gave the Oracle to Themis for an inheritance, and she prophesied in Crissa until the day of Apollo's coming. Moreover, Earth had given her a warder for her cavern shrine—a monstrous serpent, hight Python, with glaring eyes that never slept. And while Apollo was tracing out the site for his temple, that fearsome beast came forth against him, breathing flame from vast jaws, and hissing louder than a whistling wind. But quick as thought the god bent his bow, fitted an arrow to the string, and launched it through the air, as it were a lightning-flash. Singing it flew, and pierced the upreared throat of the monster; and he fell prone, choked with blood, writhing all his scaly bulk in the death-throe. One shrill strangling hiss he gave, and with that his fierce soul fled. And Apollo ran to his dead foe, and set foot upon his neck, and viewed with wonder the dragonish coils of him stretched along the hillside. "Lie there," he cried, "thou Earth-born pest! No more shalt thou be a terror to men and cattle; no more range the glens of Parnassus seeking whom

thou mayest devour! I have heard of thee, Python, though I wist not thy lair was yonder; and now will I make thy name auspicious in death, that in life was accursed, hateful to gods and mortals. For from henceforth this place shall be called *Pytho;* in remembrance of how Archer Apollo encountered huge Python, and slew him, ridding the land of a cruel scourge. And I myself will not disdain to be called Pythian Apollo."

But when Themis saw that the Warder of the Oracle was slain, she fled out of her rocky cell, dreading the mighty Son of Zeus; and he entered in and took his seat upon her ancient throne of prophecy. There, for a while, he gave responses of unfailing truth to all who came, and many were the comers and rich the gifts they brought. But Earth was wroth at heart for her daughter's sake; and she sent night-wandering phantoms abroad among men, which revealed to them in dreams such things as they were fain to know concerning the future. So they had no more need of prophet or seer, nor came any longer to inquire of the God at Pytho. Then Apollo sought redress of Zeus, pleading that the ancient Oracle of Earth was now his by right of victor, since he had overcome its dread guardian in single combat. And he besought his Father that Earth might no more defraud him of men's offerings. The Thunderer smiled and answered, "Thou art full young, bold Archer, to be thus fain of homage and royal revenues. Nevertheless, be it unto thee even as thou wilt." So saying, Zeus bowed his head with its ambrosial

curls in token of consent; and at his nod the heavens trembled, and Earth quaked to her depths. Neither durst she any more give men soothsay in dreams and visions by night; so they resorted again to Pytho, where ever since Apollo utters unfailing prophecies out of his golden, incense-clouded shrine.

When these things were come to pass, Apollo bethought him of the Nymph Telphussa, and therewithal he was 'ware how she had beguiled him. Then, wroth at heart, he went swiftly to the meadows of Haliartus, and found her sitting beside her bubbling well-spring. "Telphussa," said he, "it was not fated that thou, despite thy cunning, shouldst keep this fair ground for thine own. For I will cause thy waters to fail, and not Telphussa, but Apollo, shall have worship and renown here in days to come." Thus spake the Far-darting King; and with his strong right hand he threw down the rock above Telphussa's fount, and covered it from sight, so that her waters flow underground unto this day. And he builded for himself an altar under the spreading trees that had flourished around the well; there do men call on him in prayer by the name of *Telphousian King*, because he cast into darkness the bright stream of Telphussa.

After this, Apollo took thought for the building of his temple, and providing priests to minister therein. Now as he sate on towering Parnassus, musing where he should find just and blameless men for that holy office, he espied far off on the violet deep a swift merchant-barque, sailing Westward. And the ship's company were Cretans, good

men and true, on a trading-voyage out of Cnossus, the royal city of Minos, to Pylus in Western Greece. Apollo no sooner looked on them than he said, "These men shall build my temple and be my servants, for they are worthy," and forth he sped to meet them, and in one stride, as gods may, he had reached the ship.

But little knew those mariners who was come unto them; for Phoebus Apollo leaped aboard in the shape of a black Dolphin, the hugest ever seen; and the barque's timbers groaned and started under the monster's weight as he lay on deck. And the whole crew sat motionless for very terror; no hand shifted the sails or guided the rudder, and the ship drove on her course before the fresh southerly breeze. Now when they had made Cape Malea and were coasting Northward past Laconia, they would fain have put in to shore, hoping their dread shipmate might plunge overboard again, or else that they might escape to land. But for all they could do, their good ship would not answer to the helm, and went bounding on, as it were of her own will. League after league she flew, past Arone, and pleasant Argyphea, and Thryum at the mouth of Alpheus, and the hold of Aepu, and sacred Elis, and many a city more. And as she drew nigh to Pherae, rejoicing in the wind of heaven that swelled her sails, the mariners descried on the left hand, rising from out the clouds, the lofty peak of Ithaca, and Dulichium, and Same, and woody Zacynthus. Thus passed they beyond the Western coasts of Peloponnesus, and entered the wide firth that

bounds it on the North side, all along to sacred Isthmus, the unwearying Bridge between two seas. And immediately Zeus sent a great gale out of the West, that Apollo might come speedily to his desired haven; and due East fled the barque before it, until she neared sunny, vine-clad Crissa, on the Northern shores of the firth. Straight into the harbour she ran, piloted by the god, and grounded on the shingly beach. That same instant the Dolphin vanished from her deck; and Phoebus Apollo leaped ashore in the likeness of a Comet, a blazing portent, far-seen even in broad day. Showers of fiery sparks flew from him as he moved, an orb of flame, onward to Pytho; and glory above the brightness of the sun shone round about him, covering all the land and mounting beacon-wise to heaven. Now all that saw it shook with fear, and the womenfolk of Crissa set up dolorous wailing, expecting some dire event to follow. But swiftly came the god to Pytho, and entered his oracular cave, and the terrible splendour died away.

Then, or ever the Cretan mariners had set foot on shore, Apollo sped back to them where they sat, like men dazed, on the benches of their ship. He drew near in the semblance of a tall, blooming youth, with golden curls waving over his broad shoulders, and hailed them in friendly fashion, saying, "Who are you, strangers, and whence come you hither? Is it as traders you sail, or are you sea-roving pirates, that hazard their lives for plunder, and harry the goods of others? And why sit ye there dejected, and neither come ashore nor haul down your sails? It is

the way of seamen, when they reach port after toiling on the deep, to long for rest and feasting ashore, and so should you, friends." Then the Cretans took heart again, and the captain of them answered him, saying, "O stranger youth, who art not like to mortal men in face and form, but rather to the ever-living gods, may their blessings light on thee for thy courtesy! Prithee, tell me now, what land is this, and what folk dwell here? For Pylus were we bound when we sailed from Cnossus, our native city; but a marvel befell us on the way, and some god hath brought us to this place that we know not, in our own despite."

To whom replied the Far-darting King, "Strangers of Cnossus, forget now each of you that fair city, and his own home, and the wife of his bosom, for you shall return to them no more. Behold, I that speak unto you am the Son of Zeus, Phoebus Apollo. I, even I, brought you hither over the desert sea, not for your harm, but to the intent that you should be stewards of my rich temple in Pytho, near at hand, which shall be renowned among all kindreds of the earth. And to you it shall be given to know the secret counsels of the gods, by whose especial grace you and your children after you shall be had in honour throughout all time. Now, therefore, make all speed to do as I shall bid you. First slacken yonder ropes, lower the sails, haul your barque ashore, and take out your freight, with all the ship's gear. Then raise an altar on the shore, kindling fire thereon, and offer in sacrifice the goodly sheep that my folk of

Crissa shall bring you even now. And as ye stand about the altar, make your prayer to *Apollo Delphinius;* for because in shape of a Dolphin I leaped aboard your ship, that altar shall be consecrate to the Dolphin God, and great shall be the fame of it. Then feast ye all upon the shore, pouring out libations to the blessed Olympian gods, as the custom is; and thereafter do ye follow me, singing the Paean, to the rocky glen where you shall inhabit my glorious sanctuary."

Thus spake Phoebus Apollo, and the Cretans made haste to do all his bidding concerning the ship, and the altar, and the sacrifice. Then, when they had well feasted, they went up to rocky Pytho, dancing and singing "*Io Paean,*" after the manner of the Cretans, whom the divine Muses have gifted with the art of sacred psalmody. Apollo himself led their march with his stately stride, harping divinely on his lyre; so he brought them to his cavern dwelling, and showed them the rich offerings that adorned it—a countless store of bronze and golden tripods, such as are in kings' houses. And with the bronze of the tripods, men say, did the Cretans build straightway a fair temple against the front of the cave, the god himself directing and aiding them in the work.

Now when the temple was builded, the captain of the Cretans was troubled in his mind, and inquired of Apollo, saying, "O King, since it hath pleased thee to lead us hither, far from home and kindred, now we would have thee tell us how we are to live in this desert place. For here are neither vineyards

nor tilth, nor pastures for cattle; how then shall we find sustenance?"

And Apollo, Son of Zeus, answered him with a smile, "Ah, foolish, miserable race of mortals, forever careful and troubled about many things! A plain word will I speak unto you, O Cretans, and easy to fulfil. Let each of you henceforth minister at my altar with a broad knife in his right hand, and be it your office to slaughter the sheep for the burnt-offerings. And of every sacrifice you shall claim by right the best portion, taking tithe of all the fleecy sheep innumerable that the folk of every land will offer me in Pytho when they seek unto my oracle. So shall my priests eat and be satisfied. But see that ye entertain hospitably all pilgrims and strangers, as good stewards of the wealthy house of Apollo, and be not lifted up with pride, after the manner of men. For in word or deed ye transgress through insolence of soul, I will give your office unto others, and they shall be lords over you, holding you in grievous bondage for ever. I have spoken; do you mark well these sayings, and lay them to heart."

Apollo in Exile

So Apollo's bronze house was built, being the first of three successive temples that the hands of men raised for him in holy Pytho; and the Cretans were priests and stewards thereof, living by the sacrifices. But as for the god, it was fated that he should not yet dwell there in peace. For Earth

made appeal against him to Zeus on high, because he had slain her child and minister, the Snake Python; and thus said the great Mother, "Hear me, O Zeus, in the name of Justice that ordereth all things, from whose laws gods themselves are not exempt, be they never so mighty! Behold now, the most ancient law of all hath thy Son transgressed, in that he hath shed blood, wherein is the life; and by that law he is unclean, yea, doomed to be cast out from among gods and men, lest he bring pollution upon them. None may give him fire or water, no roof may shelter him; from land to land he must wander without rest, driven by the curse of my servant's blood that cries for vengeance from the ground. Is it not ordained from everlasting that the wrongdoer shall pay the price of his trespass? But for bloodguilt there is no remission, as well thou knowest."

Then answered Zeus, "So it was in the beginning, and in the days of Cronus my father, but it shall be so no more; for at my coming began a milder reign, and with me there is mercy, unknown to the dark Titanian Powers. Henceforth I, even I myself, will purify the shedder of blood, if he call upon me as a suppliant and make atonement in the manner I shall ordain. Yet because he hath defiled sacred Earth, Mother of All, he shall be driven from his own land, as of yore; and for seven years he shall eat the bread of exile, but in the eighth year the banished shall return home again and dwell safely, none making him afraid. This new commandment will I give unto mortals by the voice

of Phoebus my son; neither by word alone shall he declare it, but shall himself be the first to yield obedience to the same, going this very day into banishment from his house of Pytho."

Thus it came to pass that Apollo was an exile seven years, and wandered to many lands and cities; but first by command of Zeus he fared Northward to the Vale of Tempe in Thessaly, where Peneius flows down to the sea, and purified himself in the waters of the rushing river. Beautiful exceedingly is Tempe beyond all valleys of Earth; "deep-meadowed, happy, fair, with orchard lawns and bowery hollows," it lies as a garden enclosed in a winding chasm of the mountains, walled heaven-high with sheer grey cliffs. Even a god might marvel at that rich pleasaunce, and Apollo lingered many days in Tempe, joying in the Spring-tide beauty of trees and flowers and tender grasses—until he met with one more fresh and fair than them all. It was the maiden Daphne, sole daughter of Peneius the River. The sapling larch had not her grace and slenderness, the hawthorn buds were less white and fragrant than her breast, and darker than darkest violets was her clustering hair. All unawares she came face to face with golden-haired Apollo, as she strayed alone through the deep vale, carolling sweetly to herself in girlish glee; and then and there, men say, the Archer divine first felt a shaft keener than his own—the burning dart of Love. And straightway, aglow with desire, he sprang to clasp the blushing maiden; but like a startled fawn Daphne turned and fled along the

vale. Hard on her flying footsteps came Apollo, and he cried after her, "Stay, sweet Nymph, what is it thou dost fear? Turn, Daphne, and look on me—see, 'tis no shag-haired Satyr or rough peasant swain that pursues thee! A god, a god is thy lover —Phoebus, son of Zeus, Delian and Pythian—wilt not give ear to his wooing?"

But Daphne heard as one that heeds not, and fled on until breath and strength failed her. Then, faint and pale, she gasped a prayer to the Mother of All, "O kindly Mother Earth, take me now to thyself! Open and cover me, or ever I suffer dishonour worse than death to a chaste maid."

Even as she spoke, Apollo overtook and seized her; but behold, his arms clasped no breathing form of flesh and blood! It was the stem of a young tree he held—such a tree as none had seen before, graceful and slender, with glossy, fragrant leaves. For in that instant Earth had answered Daphne's prayer and taken the maiden to herself; yet so as she should not pass into nether gloom, but look still upon the sunlight in her own fair, beloved vale. Not without ruth bright Apollo gazed upon the Tree; he gently kissed the smooth-rinded stem, and sighed to feel the beating of a heart within. Then said he, "Too rashly hast thou sought this fate, sweet Daphne, in thy maiden fearfulness. Hadst thou not fled me, I would have made thee my true and honourable wife, by such solemn rites of espousal as united Zeus and Hera, for never shall Apollo find bride more wondrous fair, nor love as he loved—what thou wert. But now another lot is

thine, of thy own choosing. Yet this honour will I do thee in witness of my love, that thou shalt evermore be famed as Apollo's Tree; with no leafage but thine will I crown my hair or garland my lyre, and it shall be the victor's wreath in the glorious contests that men yet unborn will hold at my Pythian festivals."

Now as the god promised, so it came to pass; and this is why the tree that in the Greek tongue is called *Daphne*, but in ours, *The Bay*, was ever after held sacred to Apollo, and adorned his sanctuaries both in Delos and Pytho.

After this, Apollo wandered overseas, and came into the land of Phrygia, journeying in the guise of a harper. Now the Phrygian folk were much delighted with the music of his lyre, which was a new thing to them, for hitherto they had known only the music of the flute. In that they had more skill than all men, and no wonder, seeing they learned it of Marsyas the Satyr, who himself first devised the flute, fashioning it out of a tall reed of the river by which he dwelt. But when Marsyas heard the playing of the stranger minstrel, he was filled with envy, and resolved to destroy him. So, with his Satyr comrades, he waylaid Apollo on the banks of the river and said to him, " I hear, O harp-twanger, that thou vauntest thyself a far better minstrel than any in Phrygia. Come, I will challenge thee to a test; let us two have a playing-match, thou with thy lyre and I with my flute; and for prize, let him that is adjudged victor take from the other the forfeit of—his skin. Aha, thou girl-face,

thou golden-curled mother's darling, darest thou take up that challenge? Wiser for thee to own Marsyas thy better straightway, lest he tie thee anon to yonder pine tree and flay off thy dainty hide."

Calmly answered Apollo, "I take thy challenge, Phrygian, and will submit to the forfeit unless I—inflict it. But who shall be judges in our contest?"

"Why, these comrades of mine, to be sure," said Marsyas, pointing to his brother Satyrs. "What better wouldst thou desire? Unless, forsooth," he added scoffingly, "the divine Muses should come down from heaven to be our arbiters." And at that word, "We are near! We are here!" rang out sweet voices suddenly, "Pipe to us, O Satyr, that we may learn if thy flute be indeed musical as bright Apollo's lyre."

Then Marsyas and his crew saw the fair, immortal Nine standing round about the young minstrel, and himself transfigured by the sunny radiance of a heaven-dwelling god; and they were abashed in the presence of the Olympians. But needs must Marsyas abide by his challenge, and he began to pipe with a good courage, trusting in his skill. Plaintive was the strain—

> "With many a winding bout
> Of linkéd sweetness long drawn out;"—

even such as in after ages soothed the grief of mourners and bade last farewell to the dead. So, all unwitting, Marsyas fluted his own dirge. For when, in his turn, Apollo struck the lyre, its

harmonies rolled forth like melodious thunder of falling waters and the silver clamour of a thousand birds; and not the Muses only, but the astonied Satyrs, cried out that he had conquered. And as Marsyas would have done unto the vanquished, so did the victor unto him. Then all the Satyr tribe, and the Nymphs of wood and stream made moan for him, lamenting that never more they should hear his sweet, wild pipings over hill and dale; and they took down his body from the pine-tree and cast it into the sedgy river. There rests the Satyr minstrel, but he is not dead; for Earth, pitying his fate, made him the Genius of the flood, wherefore it is called *Marsyas* unto this day.

And now Apollo must encounter another foeman, incomparably more terrible, at the call of his loved Mother. For at that time Leto, on her way to the Pythian shrine, fared through the plain of Panopeus where dwelt the Earth-born Giant Tityus, huge of mould; who no sooner espied the goddess than he was smitten with fierce desire and rushed upon her, purposing impious violence. Then Leto cried in anguish on her son's name, and he came speeding from afar, and bent his bow against the Giant; but Tityus defied him, breathing out threats and slaughter, and tearing up a tall pine by the roots, whirled it aloft to fell him to earth. Down crashed the tree with a noise like thunder, but lightly Apollo avoided from beneath it, and the next instant a more tremendous shock made the solid ground heave and quake as vast Tityus fell headlong, pierced through eye and brain by the god's keen

arrow. Thus he perished; and even after death he is tormented in the Nether World because he dared to insult a bed-fellow of Zeus. There he lies fettered, his monstrous limbs spread over nine roods of ground; and two vultures, insatiate Hounds of Zeus, perch on his breast-bone, rummaging with beak and claw for their provender beneath.

Now after this, Apollo wended Northward again, and came to the great wooded mountain that is called Pelion. Not by chance he came thither, but prescient of a certain happiness awaiting him. And first he would go to visit a dweller on that mountain who was honoured as a dear friend by all the immortal gods—Chiron the Centaur. A wild, lawless race are the twy-formed Centaurs, creatures half man, half horse; but Chiron was far unlike the rest in all but bodily shape. For he was the son of deep-counselling Cronus; who long of yore had been enamoured of the Centauress Philyra, and enjoyed her in the form of a stallion; and with the wisdom of his divine sire the Fates had given him a heart full of gentleness, goodness, and truth.

Chiron's home was a lofty cavern near the mountain top, opening on a grassy pine-shadowed glade. Thither Apollo bent his steps, thridding the dusky mazes of the forest—but near the cavern threshold he paused, wonderstruck, to view a combat such as never mortal or immortal saw before. Midway in the glade one habited as a hunter was wrestling with a great tawny lion, that fought, man-like, erect; to and fro they swayed, locked in desperate grapple, beast and hunter so equally matched that neither

gave ground a foot; and, marvel of marvels, this daring hunter was a girl! The god's eye dwelt with delight on her queenly head and splendid supple limbs; he said in his heart, Lo, this is she I am come seeking," and with that he called Chiron to him out of the cave. "Son of Philyra," he cried, "come forth from thy hallowed grot to mark this woman, and wonder at her exceeding might and indomitable spirit. Behold what a combat she hath assayed, this maiden who knows not fear! What man begat her? Offshoot of what race doth she haunt the shadowy glens of Pelion, rejoicing in her boundless strength? Tell me, were it sin to lay this renowned hand on her forthwith, and in love-dalliance pluck the honied flower?"

To whom inspired Chiron, with laughter benign wrinkling his mild brows, straightway uttered his rede, and said: "O Phoebus, secret are the keys that subtle Persuasion holds to Love's hallowed joys; and both gods and men have shame of this, to enter on sweet bed-rites openly. Yea, bashful are all lovers; for even thee, who hast no part or lot in falsehood, hath melting passion beguiled to dissemble with thy tongue. Dost *thou*, O King, ask me this damsel's lineage—thou that knowest the issues of all things and the ways of their fulfilment? Thou, that tellest the number of the leaves Earth puts forth in Spring, and of the grains of sand that are rolled by ocean-tides and eddying rivers! Nay, then, if I must needs measure myself against the Wise One, I will e'en say on. Yonder maiden is Cyrene, daughter to King Hypseus that

rules the tribes of the Lapithae. No love hath she for the work or pastimes of home-keeping damsels, but all her delight is in the chase; and her father's flocks are safe from marauding beasts by reason of her watchfulness and prowess. And as her bridegroom, Apollo, thou art come to this mountain glen, whence thou wilt bear her even now across the sea to the fruitful Libyan land, the Garden of Zeus. There, in time to come, shalt thou make her Queen of a city set on an hill, founded by an island race that thine oracles wilt guide to their new home. But now shall bounteous Libya herself welcome bridegroom and bride to a golden marriage-chamber, where in due time thy glorious spouse shall bear thee a son. Then far-renownéd Hermes shall take the babe from his mother's arms and bring him to nurses divine—even to Earth and the fair-throned Seasons; and they shall cradle him upon their knees, and distil nectar and ambrosia upon his lips. So shall they make their nursling very god, a Zeus or a pure Apollo, the joy of his faithful, an ever-present Guardian of the flocks; whom many tribes of men shall adore by the names of *Agreus* and *Nomius*, but by others he shall be called *Aristaeus*."

Such was the prophecy of Chiron; and his word returned not unto him void, but all that he had spoken was fulfilled in the after time. Meanwhile, as he yet talked with Apollo, the maiden Cyrene overcame the grisly lion, choking the life out of him with her strong, slender hands; and from that victory she passed forthwith to a sweeter contest. For swift the achievement and short the ways when

Immortals press onward to their goal. That same hour did Apollo waft the huntress maid overseas in a golden car; and as he lighted down on the Libyan shore, came silver-footed Aphrodite, and laid her soft hand on his, bidding all joy to the divine Bridegroom. To a golden bower she led the pair, and herself joined them in blissful wedlock, and over their marriage-couch threw lovely shamefastness. And thus King Apollo took to himself a bride.

CHAPTER VIII

HERMES

"With lips that brim with laughter
But never once respond,
And feet that fly on feathers,
And serpent-circled wand."

A. E. HOUSMAN.

ATLAS the Titan had seven daughters, beautiful as stars; and the youngest, whose name was Maia, was the fairest of them all. While Cronus was king, Atlas and his brothers possessed the land of Arcadia, but when Zeus overthrew and banished the Titans, the seven maidens fled into the high mountains for fear of him; and they wandered singly, as it seemed best to them, looking each for a hiding-place apart. Now Maia found a cavern, long and lofty, in the forest-clad side of the great Arcadian mountain Cyllene; there she made her abode, and the Wood Nymphs tended her, joying in her beauty. But nought escapes the eye of Zeus, with whom the darkness is no darkness and the night as clear as the day; from his throne above he espied fair-tressed Maia sitting in the cave's rocky portal, over-shadowed though it was by beech and pine; and straightway love thrilled his mighty heart. That night the King of Gods lay wakeful by slumbering Hera's side, not daring to

arise from the golden bed, for woe betide him if his lady wife should mark whither he went! But in the morning watch, when sleep lies heaviest on the eyelids of gods and men, Zeus arose full stealthily and betook him to the Cyllenian cave. And there he fared as well as lover's heart can wish, for neither cold nor coy proved the maiden, being of her nature buxom, blithe, and debonair. Nor was Zeus unmindful of her towardness, though, after his wont, he returned no more; unknown to jealous Hera, he bestowed on Maia jewels, raiment, and household plenishing out of his own treasury, so that she might keep queenly state in her rocky halls.

Now in the ninth month thereafter, on the fourth day of the month, Hermes, son of Maia, first saw the light. His fair mother wrapped the babe in swaddling bands, and laid him in the cradle of plaited osier; but while she thought him sleeping he freed his tender limbs, slid from his basket-bed, and tip-toed to the cavern doorway, already plotting a roguery. For the children of gods pass not through helpless, unweeting infancy; as soon as they are born, they have strength and wit to do what seems to them good. And newborn Hermes planned in his swift mind to steal that very day the oxen of his brother Apollo.

But as he crossed the stone threshold, he spied a tortoise creeping along, browsing on the tender grass before the cave. Merrily laughed the little god, and ran to clutch the prize, crying, "Here is fine treasure-trove indeed, and lucky am I to find it! Welcome, my winsome lass, my frisking dancer,

my boon-companion gay! Prithee, whence comest thou, Speckle-shell, thou dainty plaything, thou horn-cased mountaineer? Nay, but let me bear thee within doors—know'st not the old saw, *Best bide at home, they meet mischief who roam?*"

With that, he took up the tortoise and carried her into the cave, and said to her, "Now, treasure of mine, thou shalt see my high regard for thee. For I am about to bestow on thee a twofold honour—henceforth thou shalt be a counter-charm against baleful witchcraft while thou livest, and when thou art dead, thou shalt sing right sweetly." So saying, Hermes killed the tortoise, piercing her between the joints of her harness with a chisel of grey steel; and therewith he scooped out the flesh from the stony shell, and broke off the breastplate from the carapace. As a thought flashes through the mind of one beset by quick-coming fancies, as the eye is quick in turning, even so swiftly renowned Hermes wrought the thing his heart imagined. Forthwith he bored holes in the rim of the back shell, and having cut reeds to measure, fixed them therein; over that framework he stretched a piece of ox-hide for sounding-board, fitted thereto a pair of curving ox-horns, and joined the tips with a cross-bar, furnished with seven pegs. Last, he fastened over all seven gut-strings, and tuned them, screwing them tight with the pegs—and there was the Lyre! Soon as he had framed the beautiful vocal thing, the god swept the strings with a plectrum, one by one, and it chimed silver-clear under his hand. Then to its pealing harmony he began a lovely song,

improvising as gay lordlings do at a carousal, when the lyre is passed from hand to hand, and each in turn trolls a jesting stave, capping the one before. He sang of Zeus, Son of Cronus, and his wanton dalliance with Maia of the shining sandals, and how she brought into the world a Babe divine. His mother's praise he sang, telling the queenly state she kept, the number of her handmaidens, and the rich store of tripods and goodly caldrons that adorned her sumptuous house.

Thus sang Hermes, but his thoughts the while were busy with other things; anon he hid away the lyre in his cradle, and sped forth of the cavern, bent on mischief such as reivers and caterans do under cloud of night.

Helios, God of Day, had plunged with his bright car and fiery-footed steeds into the Ocean deeps, when Hermes came running to the shadowy glens of Pieria, where Apollo's sacred kine graze the lush, unmown pastures by day, but at night they are stalled in strong-built byres. But neither bolt nor bar might keep out the artful son of Maia; and eftsoons he had driven off fifty lowing oxen of Apollo's herd. Now he put to proof his marvellous cunning and the godlike strength of him; for he drove the beasts tail foremost down the mountain ways, so that their hoof-prints pointed backwards to their home, albeit they, contrariwise, were moving towards the plains by the sea. And when he came to the sea-shore, Hermes had ready another device, that none might track his footprints along the sands. For he had plucked an armful of tamarisk and

myrtle shoots on his way down the mountain, and now he plaited them together, leaves and all, into two faggots, stripped off his sandals, and bound the faggots under his feet. Thus shod, he hied along by devious paths, like one that skulks on a secret errand.

And he met no man by the way until he came to the meadow-lands of Onchestus; but there he passed a vineyard all in bloom where a churl, old and bent, was digging, who eyed him amazedly. Nothing abashed, Hermes accosted him, "Truly, old Crookback, thou wilt have thy fill of wine when the grapes ripen on these vine-rows thou art trenching so busily! Now, churl, I have a word for thee; having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not, and keep a silent tongue in thy head, so long as none meddle with goods or gear of thine." So saying, he urged on the strong-foot cattle over hill and dale.

But now Night, his dark ally, had forsaken him, and rosy-fingered Dawn was calling men to their work again as the bold son of Zeus came with his booty to the river Alpheus. There on the fair water-meadows he marked a spacious, high-roofed byre, with a stack of fresh-cut fodder against it, and the byre was empty. Hermes watered the kine, and fed them from the stack, and drove them into the byre, still munching trusses of lotus and juicy clover; then he built a pile of dry sticks, and kindled it woodman-fashion, rubbing two peeled laurel-twigs together until sparks flashed out, and deftly he blew them to a flame. So as he had set

the piled wood ablaze—"Here is a noble cooking-fire," quoth he, laughing, "and somehow I have a longing for the savour of roast meat. What if I killed two of those cows for a breakfast?" No sooner said than done, for easily the mighty child slaughtered, flayed, and dismembered two of the fattest kine; and having put on spits choice slices of the meat, he set them down to roast at the fire. But the hides he stretched out to dry in the sun, playing boy-like at the tanner's craft. And next he would play at sacrifice; so he ranged twelve flat stones for altars, and laid on each a goodly portion of flesh, offering them with due solemnity to the Twelve Greatest Gods—amongst whom he failed not to number Hermes, son of Zeus. Now when he smelled the rich savour of those burnt-offerings, and of the meat he had set roasting, his mouth watered for a meal of flesh, Immortal though he was, but he restrained himself, knowing the food of men was not for him. And being now wearied of play, he hasted to cover all trace of his doings there, burning the heads and feet of the slaughtered kine, hiding their carcases in the byre, and quenching the embers of his fire with water. Lastly, he raked the sandy soil over the ashes, threw his brushwood sandals into the river, and so hied him back to Cyllene.

Neither mortal nor immortal did Hermes encounter on his road; all unespied he went, and never a watch-dog barked at him as he passed fold or homestead. When he came to his mother's dwelling, behold the door was fast shut; but what

was that to him? Like to an autumn breeze, or a mist-wreath, he stole through the keyhole; noiselessly he crept into his cradle and rolled the swaddling bands about him, and there he lay like a helpless infant, his hands patting the coverlet, with his fair lyre at his side. Howbeit the god eluded not his goddess-mother's eye, and she bent over him and said, "Ah, cunning rogue, clothed with impudence as with a garment, what errand took thee abroad? Where wast playing truant all night? One of these days, methinks, I shall see thee dragged off prisoner by strong Apollo, with a chain about thy middle; or if that betide not, thou wilt grow up a rascal thief in the glens."

To whom her son replied with cajoling words, "Mother mine, why art thou afraid for my sake, as though I were a silly babe, an innocent, a timorous thing that quails if its mother chide? Nay, but *I* shall essay an art, the best in the world, to thy continual profit and mine, and no longer will we two live cabined here, nor alone of Immortals lack for sacrifices and invocations. Better far, to consort evermore with the gods on high, endowed with wealth unmeasured, lords of abounding spoils, than to keep house in a gloomy cave! As for my prerogative, I shall claim one not inferior to Apollo's; which if my Father grant not, verily I will win by my own right hand the rank of a Captain of Freebooters. But if, as thou fearest, the famed son of Leto now bring me to a reckoning, I trow I can devise heavier loss for him than this of his cattle. For I will go and mine a passage through the wall

of his lordly house at Delphi, and carry off good store of splendid tripods and caldrons, of gold and flashing steel, and costly raiment; ay, will I, and that thou shalt see, mother, an it please thee."

Thus talked they together, Lady Maia and her son; but meanwhile Apollo came speeding to Onchestus, fair precinct of Earth-enfolding Poseidon, and saw the old humpbacked churl with whom the child Hermes had spoken mowing grass for his bestial on the wayside, hard by the fence of a vineyard. Apollo hailed him, and said, "Old grass-cutter of verdurous Onchestus, I am come hither from Pieria, seeking the crumple-horned cows of my herd. For my black bull who grazed apart, and my four dogs, wise as men, that guarded the herd, those are left me, strange to tell; but the fifty kine are gone from their loved pastures. Tell me now, good ancient, hast thou perchance seen a man pass this way, driving a herd of that number?"

"As for that, friend," answered the agéd churl, "it is ill work for the tongue to tell all the eyes have seen. A host of wayfarers pass along this road, and some be rogues, no doubt, and some honest folk enough; but how can I tell one sort from the other? However, fair sir, as I was digging in my vineyard yonder at peep of day, I saw—or thought I saw, for i'faith I have no clearness in the matter—a child, a mere babe, following a herd of kine, with a wand in his little hand. Methought he walked not straight onward, but lurched to and fro across the way, and by some means I fathomed

not, he was driving the beasts with their heads towards him."

When he heard that, Apollo left him and went his way, musing who that strange child might be; and suddenly he saw an eagle high in air, flying widdershins; well could the Seer divine read that omen, and knew forthwith that a son of Zeus had lifted his cattle. So on he fared, making for Cyllene; anon he saw prints of many hoofs in the dust of the highway, and he cried, "Welladay, what uncanny ferlie do I see? Here, sure enough, are the tracks of my kine, but they point homeward to Pieria. And what are those other tracks, crossing and re-crossing the way—no footprints of man or woman, neither of grey wolf, or lion, or bear! Nay, shaggy Centaurs leave no such huge tracks behind them, I trow, as they gallop along with thudding hoofs. Weird footmarks along this side the way—and still weirder over yonder!"

So saying, archer Apollo betook him with all speed to high Cyllene. Soft, thyme-scented airs were blowing over the mountain-side, where flocks of long-shanked sheep browsed peacefully—a sight to delight even a god. But Apollo lingered not in that pleasant scene; straight on he sped to the tree-embosomed cavern, and strode into Maia's rocky hall.

Now when Hermes saw the god's wrathful mien, and that he was come after his stolen kine, he nestled deep down among his fragrant wrappings, curled himself up into a ball, and made pretence to be sound asleep. Like a child but newly born,

fresh from its first bath, he lay there; but meanwhile he held his treasured lyre close under his armpit. And Apollo, seeing him, thought, "This can never be the thief; surely his lady mother hath hidden the son of Zeus, and seeks to pass this infant off on me for him." So he made himself and his errand known to fair Maia, and having scanned narrowly every nook of the cavern, he asked her to unlock her three store-closets, that he might search therein. Maia smiled, and gave him her shining key, wherewith he opened the closets one after another; now, the first was full of nectar and ambrosia, delicious fare of the Immortals; the second of gold and silver vessels; and the third of purple and fine linen—the gleaming apparel of the Nymph. For good store had she of such treasures as the gods are wont to have in their houses. But neither thief nor trace of the booty could Apollo find; and on that he went up to Hermes where he lay, and said to him, "Hey, boy, couching in thy cradle, tell me straightway what has become of my kine; else we two shall fall out, and that in most unmannerly wise. Ay, for I shall take and fling thee into murky Tartarus, into fearsome, rayless darkness; thence neither thy mother dear, no, nor thy Father, shall bring thee up to the light again, but thou shalt be a wretched rover in shades of underground, and a prince among men fordone."

To whom wily Hermes made answer, "Ah, son of Leto, what mean these harsh words? Is it looking for kine of the meadows thou art come hither? I have neither seen nor heard tell of them, by my

troth; 'tis not I can give thee news of them, or earn the wonted reward therefor. Nay, how canst thou suspect me, good my Lord? Seem I anywise like a sturdy cattle-lifter? Nought have *I* to do with raids or forays; my mind runs as yet on other things —sleep, and my mother's milk, and soft wrappings for my limbs, and my warm baths. A likely tale, forsooth, that a newborn infant should run out o' doors and go cattle-stealing! Methinks thou wert best not tell that among the Immortals, for thy credit's sake. Why, 'tis laughable, the charge thou bring'st against me! I tell thee, I am but a day old; my little feet are far too tender for treading the rough roads. Yea, an it like thee, I will swear a mighty oath by the head of Zeus my father that I am neither guilty myself, nor have seen any other stealer of thy kine—whatever *kine* may be, which I know not, I, save by hearing thee speak of them."

Thus spoke cunning Hermes, with many a wink and furtive, sidelong glance, and ever and anon he whistled, like a saucy urchin, while he maintained his false denials. And Apollo could not forbear laughing as he answered, "Innocent babe, and supersubtle cheat, I see thee what thou art! Many a rich house, I ween, wilt thou break into by night in time to come; many a man wilt thou bring to want, pillaging his goods by stealth under cloud of darkness; and a terror thou wilt be to herdsmen on the hills, whensoever thou hast a mind to feast on flesh of sheep or oxen. Truly, among the gods thou art like to have the name and dignity of a

Prince—of Thieves! But rouse thee now, comrade of sable Night; come forth of thy cradle, if thou would'st not sleep the last, unawakening sleep."

He said, and snatched up Hermes in his arms; but instantly the wily babe fetched a sneeze so loud and violent that Apollo started and dropped him to the ground. "Much thanks for that lucky omen, O son of Zeus and Maia!" cried the Archer God; "now know I of a surety thou art he that shall show me where my lost cattle be!" And for all he was in haste, he must needs sit down to laugh his fill at the boy's trick. But Hermes got nimbly to his feet, and faced him with an affronted air, drawing the swaddling-clothes about him up to his very ears. "What means this violence," he said, "thou Far-shooter, thou most ferocious of gods? Is it all along of cattle thou dost so despitefully use me in thy rage? Out and alas! Now a murrain seize the whole race of cattle—whatever 'cattle' may be, which I know not save by hearsay, never having set eyes on one of them. But since thou wilt not be persuaded, or let me alone, let us go now to Father Zeus, that he may judge between us."

So saying, Hermes went swiftly out of the cavern, and Apollo after him. Up to the snowy peak of huge Olympus they went, that shone dazzling fair in the morning sunshine, for there Zeus was sitting on his throne, holding a council of the gods. Now when the Thunderer saw little Hermes come pacing sedately towards the throne, and radiant Apollo following close on his heels, ox-whip in hand, he spoke thus to his Archer son, "Whence, my Phoebus,

hast thou driven hither this rich booty—a newborn child, no less, with something of a Herald's aspect? Goodly gear this to bring before the synod of the Olympians!"

"Sire," answered kingly Apollo, "'tis no trivial cause I am come to lay before thee, though thou art pleased to banter me as if I were the one and only lover of plunder. This boy I caught, after hunting him a weary way, in his lair on steep Cyllene—a manifest robber; ay, and a parlous knave beyond any I have seen among Immortals, or men that live by rapine. For yestereve he stole my kine from the Pierian meadow and drove them down to the sea, and thence over hill and dale, making for the South country. Now I, coming at daybreak to the byres, found my kine gone, all the fifty of them, and sped me down the mountain, seeking their trail—but when I found it I beheld a marvel, like the work of a mighty god. For the hoof-prints were reversed, pointing towards the hill-pastures, whence my kine had been driven; and as for tracks of the drover—this master-contriver of a boy had gone neither on his feet nor his hands along the shore and dusty highway, but used some device that left marks huge and portentous to the view. Such trail, methought, might a wayfarer leave that instead of sandals was shod with branches of sapling oaks! Yea, that trick had fairly baffled me, were it not that a mortal man had seen this rogue pass by, and given me word of him. But when he had quietly bestowed his plunder in some hiding-place —where, I know not, for by his doublings on the

way he threw me off his trail—the villain child got him back to his cradle in the depths of a gloomy cave—a pit-mirk den where not even an eagle's eye could discern him. But for all that *I* found him, and when I taxed him with the theft, he denied it stoutly, acting right cunningly the innocent, puny babe."

When Apollo had made an end of his story, he sat down in his place; then boldly stood Hermes forth in the midst of the Olympians, and thus addressed himself to their King: "Father Zeus, I shall tell thee the mere truth of this matter, for I am true in word and deed, and know not to speak falsely. This day at sunrise came Apollo to our house, looking, so he said, for his kine that were stolen; and he charged me with the theft, though he brought none of the blessed gods along as an eye-witness of the deed. Without witness or proof he accused me, and sought to wring confession from me by duresse—threatening to hurl me into Tartarus if I would not speak out. Yes, forsooth, this thy son must browbeat and misuse me because he is come to the flower of his lusty youth, while I am but a weakling babe of a day old—as well he knows, albeit he feigns to take me for a sturdy cattle-lifter. Trust me, Father—for as I hear thou dost own thyself my sire—I am guiltless in this matter, and that will I swear by a solemn oath. By this well-adorned vestibule of thy courts on high, I neither stole Apollo's kine nor wot who did steal them; and I will be avenged one day on my ruthless accuser, mighty though he be! Aid me, thou,

for who but Zeus should favour—the *younger* brother? "

Thus spake Cyllenian Hermes, with a wink of his eye, and drew his soft baby-shawl closer about him. And Zeus, youngest son of Cronus, laughed long and loud at the tiny boy's quaint aspect and adroit pleading in his own behalf. Then he bade his two sons be reconciled, and go together to the place where Hermes had bestowed the cattle; commanding Maia's boy to guide Apollo thither without more trickery. And at his nod, Hermes turned and made straight for the banks of Alpheus; such awe doth the majesty of cloud-compelling Zeus strike into the boldest heart. So the two gods came both together to the river side, and Hermes made haste to drive out the kine from the byre. But Apollo, looking about him, saw the hides of the two slaughtered cows spread out on the rock, and cried to Hermes, " Ah, rogue, what is this I see? How hadst thou the strength, babe newly born, to kill and flay two strong kine? Now in good sooth, I dread to think what thy might will be hereafter; if it increase as thou growest in stature, son of Maia, we are all undone! "

Banteringly he spoke, yet Hermes could well perceive that he was angered at heart for the slaughter of his kine; he cast down his shifty eyes, like one abashed, and quickly bethought him how to soothe Leto's son, fierce in wrath though he was. Forthwith he drew his lyre from under his arm—for he had carried that treasure with him in the folds of his swaddling clothes—and tuned the

strings, proving each in order with the plectrum, until they chimed in sweet accord under his hand. And at the appeasing, gracious harmony, Apollo laughed for sheer delight; like one spellbound he listened as Hermes played a prelude; insomuch that the boy took courage, and drew nearer, and began to sing melodiously to the pealing lyre. He sang the Beginnings of the Immortal Gods, and of Earth, the All-Mother, and of the portion allotted each divinity by the sovereign Fates. But first of all gods he extolled Mnemosyne, Mother of the Muses; for her born servant was he, as are all bards and orators. And then he sang the praise of the rest of the Immortals, in order of age and dignity, giving each the honour due unto his name.

Now while Apollo hearkened to the singer, and the manifold music he drew from the hollow shell, desire of that wondrous vocal thing overmastered his soul; and when Hermes ceased, he cried, "O Ox-killer, cunning Artificer, easily now canst thou make thy peace with me, for this thing thou hast devised, this sweet-voiced boon-companion is well worth fifty kine! But tell me now, I prithee, didst thou frame this marvel by mother-wit, or hath some god or mortal man gifted thee therewith, and taught thee minstrelsy strange and new? Never, I ween, have dwellers in earth or heaven heard melody such as this I hear thee make, O Thief, Child of Zeus and Cyllenian Maia! Ah, what art was there! What mastery! What charm against eating cares! Yea, though I walk ever with the Muses, lovers of the Dance, of rich-woven Verse, of flowing Song, and of

the Flute's sweet clamour—never before hath any strain touched my heart with pleasure so rare as thy playing gave me even now. Hither, come hither, Child that hast mastery of such craft divine, young though thou art! Sit here by me, and list thine elder's rede. Verily I say unto thee, great fame shall thou and thy mother shortly have among the heaven-dwelling gods; for I myself will lead thee among them, crowned with glory and honour, and will give thee resplendent gifts. Lo, this I swear on the javelin of cornel wood that is in my hand!"

Thus spoke Apollo, casting many a covetous glance upon the lyre; and wily Hermes answered, smiling to himself, "Take thou a gift in return, Far-shooter, for I see thou hast a mind thereto, and I nowise grudge it thee. Take to thyself this clear-voiced companion of mine, this seven-stringed lyre; this very day it shall discourse most eloquent music under thy hand, for easily wilt thou get skill of it, who hast for thy prerogative to know whatsoever thy heart desireth. Yea, such honour hath Zeus granted to the Son in whom he is well pleased, and there is nothing hid from thee of things that were, and are, and are to come. Prophet art thou, Apollo, Revealer to mortals of thy Father's will, Augur of him that is the source of all oracles, signs, and omens; who among the gods is like unto thee, O Prince, in counsel, valour, and might? Wherefore full fain am I to show thee courtesy, and win thy goodwill; very gladly I yield up to thee the lyre and the joyous art of minstrelsy, to be thy

loved pastime for ever. Only, since thou hast promised me a gift, vouchsafe me, an it like thee, this boon and none other—to be a Seer and Soothsayer even as thou art."

So saying, he held out the lyre; Apollo took it eagerly, and putting his long ox-whip into the hand of Hermes, he said: "My cows are thine henceforth, son of Maia, in exchange for this voiceful treasure; well may they prosper in thy keeping, little Herdsman, and much profit have thou by their increase, when they couple with the bulls in thine Arcadian pastures. But as for the gift of prophecy thou cravest, it is not mine to give, either to thee or any of the deathless gods; for when Zeus granted me to know his holy and hidden purposes, he took a mighty oath of me that I would share that knowledge with none. Yet, brother mine, I will tell thee a secret, whereby thou mayest become a soothsayer not without renown, though of lower degree. There are certain Bee-Maidens called *Thriae*, wingéd sisters three, that haunt the dells of Parnassus; and they have a manner of soothsay all their own, which I learned of them in my boyhood, what time I herded kine on that mountain, as yet unheeded and unhonoured of my father. Now this is the secret of it: the Thriae flit far and near over the mountain, gathering yellow honey; and by that ambrosial food they are inspired; so that when they have eaten of the honeycomb they are fain to utter unerring soothsay with clear voice, but if they lack their sweet fare, they prophesy falsely, murmuring confusedly together. But thou, having learned

their secret, canst henceforth inquire of the Thriae at thy pleasure; and so thou mayest give true oracles to mortals concerning many things, albeit concerning the greater issues of Fate they must seek unto Apollo, Lord of holy Delphi."

When Apollo had thus spoken, he began to make trial of the lyre, striking the chords with the plectrum as he had seen Hermes do, and it was as a familiar thing in his hands, so that forthwith he also sang a lovely lay, harping sweetly the while, and delighting his heart with melody divine. Then, smiling well pleased, the god rose up, and said to Hermes, "Come, brother, let us now go to the house of Zeus our father, that thou mayest take thy place among the glorious fellowship of the Olympians. But first I would have thee swear, O cunning one, by the great oath that binds immortal gods, even the Water of Styx, never at any time to rob me again of aught that is mine. Else, so deft and wily a thief art thou, I fear thou wilt steal away both this new treasure and the Bow that is my pride."

So Hermes pledged himself by the binding oath of the gods that he would never steal from Apollo aught that was his, nor make inroad into his rich temple of Delphi for plunder's sake. And thereupon Apollo lovingly plighted him his troth as friend and comrade, vowing that none among the divine or mortal offspring of Zeus should be dearer to him than Hermes. After that, the two went hand in hand up to the sky-mansions, and came in to the banquet of the gods; and Zeus was glad at

heart when he saw the brotherly love there was between them. Readily he granted to Hermes the honours that Apollo requested in his behalf; and thus hath the son of Maia a fourfold office and dignity among the blest Immortals. For firstly, he is the Herald of Zeus, a sacred Envoy between gods and men, and Patron of all heralds and ambassadors; secondly, he is the god of pastoral folk, Giver of increase to flocks and herds; next, the Luck-bringer, who crowns with profit and success the enterprises of all traders and travellers; and finally, when mortals must set forth upon the last, long journey, it is Hermes that guides them to the shadowy kingdom of souls. Moreover, Apollo for his own part gave Hermes a gift magical —a three-branched Golden Wand, having this virtue, that being waved before the eyes of any one it charms him instantly asleep. So Hermes was numbered with the Olympians, and received worship of men as one of the Twelve Great Gods; but though housed in the shining courts of Zeus, he never forgot the vales of Arcady; and of all names whereby mortals called upon him, the name of *Cyllenian* was most grateful to his ear.

CHAPTER IX

ARTEMIS

" Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
And thy crystal-shining quiver;
Give unto the flying hart
Space to breathe, how short soever;
Thou that mak'st a day of night,
Goddess excellently bright! "

Hymn to Cynthia.

WHEN Hesperus, the sweet star that leads all things home—man from his labour, and flocks and herds from their pastures—shines in the evening sky, then Pytho's Lord rises up from his golden, oracular throne and fares homeward also to his Father's house. There, by the Hearth of Zeus, the Olympians are gathered together at the ambrosial feast; and soon as they behold radiant Apollo, lyre in hand, their thoughts turn to minstrelsy and song. And the banquet ended, Apollo stands up in their midst, harping divinely; while the clear-voiced Muses raise their choric song, chanting the blissful lot of the gods and the woes they dispense unto mortal men, that toil and suffer their lives long without remedy against age and death. Meantime the Graces with lovely tresses, the boon Seasons, and rose-cheeked Hebe, and Aphrodite, and her child Harmonia, dance hand in hand to the pealing lyre; among them frolic Ares, and the bright-eyed Argus-

Slayer; and Phoebus Apollo himself leads the winding dance as he plays, stepping high and delicately, with sheen about him of twinkling feet and flying raiment. But who is she that moves with queenliest grace amid that band of goddesses, tallest of them all, severe in youthful beauty? It is the maiden Artemis, Lady of the Wild Things, lover of the chase, twin sister to Apollo. And deep-thoughted Zeus and gentle Leto are glad at heart, beholding that glorious pair leaders of the revel among the blest Olympians. Dearly their Father loves them both, and as he has exalted Apollo above all gods, so has he given to Artemis wider sway than to any goddess, save Hera the Queen and great Athena.

Now, because of Hera's ill-will, Leto reared not her daughter in the courts of heaven, but she was brought up in a cave of Mount Cynthus, in Delos, her birthplace. And her nurse was Hecate, Goddess of the Night, Queen of Witches, who has power in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth. The child Artemis delighted to roam through the glades of Cynthus, and the young of all the woodland creatures became her playmates; hence is it that she loves them still, and watches with tender care over them all—sleek cubs of wolf and fox and pard, and velvet-coated fawns, and the mother-bird's callow brood. But growing older, she began to take joy in the chase, and Archer Apollo gave her bow and quiver wherewith to shoot the flying deer. No mind had she to the works of home-keeping maidens, that pace to and fro before the loom, deftly throwing the shuttle; but in high-girt tunic, with buskins on her

swift, lovely feet, she ranged the wildwood, questing for her dappled prey. And from the mountain where first she followed the chase, Artemis took her name of *Cynthia*.

Now there lived in those days a certain mighty hunter called Orion. Strange tales were rife concerning his birth, and though his parentage was unknown, most believed him the son of a god, because of his beauty and gigantic stature. According to some, his father was Poseidon; and certain it was that Orion had from him the power of walking dryshod over the sea. In this manner he had come, none knew whence, to the Isle of Chios, which at that time was overrun by lions and other beasts of prey; insomuch that the King, Oenopion, had let proclaim he would give his daughter for wife to any man who would rid him and his folk of that plague. And Orion did so, hunting the ravening beasts with bow and spear, until he had slain them every one; but when the King saw the godlike strength of the man, he was afraid to have him for a son-in-law, lest he should seize the kingdom for himself. So, though he durst not refuse Orion the promised bride, he devised foul treachery against him; for having made him drunk with new wine at the marriage feast, he put out his eyes. But the gods had compassion on Orion, and as he wandered forth of Chios, helpless and blind, they guided his steps to the Forge of Hephaestus, in Lemnos; and the smiths of the Fire-God restored his sight by leading him where the first beams of the rising sun might fall upon his eyes. And being

healed of his blindness, Orion went in haste to Chios, and slew the wicked Oenopion in his own palace-hall, and reigned in his stead. As for his bride, she loved him never the worse, having grieved exceedingly at the loss of him; so for a while they dwelt happily together.

But ere long Orion must needs go hunting again, and because he had destroyed all the wild beasts of Chios, he fared overseas to other isles, and last to Delos. There bright-quivered Artemis encountered him in the Cynthian forest, as he was spearing a fierce wild boar; well pleased with his prowess and stalwart beauty, the huntress maiden greeted him benignly, and from that hour took him for her comrade in the chase. But well saith the wisdom of the ancients that Good Fortune in excess breeds Insolence, and Insolence, having conceived, brings forth ruinous Madness. So it was with Orion; for he could not brook discreetly the high favour bestowed on him, but was lifted up with pride and filled with lawless desire; until, grown infatuate, he dared to lay wanton hands on the pure daughter of Zeus. Then did the terrible wrath of the Immortals flash as it were consuming fire from the eyes of virgin Artemis; like a lioness bursting from the toils she shook off that rash lover's grasp, snatched up bow and quiver, and in another instant stretched him dead at her feet with an arrow through his heart. So died mighty Orion, a signal warning to all those who aspire to mate above their own degree.

Yet the Olympians looked down not without

ruth on the great Hunter, where he lay, beautiful in death, on the mountain side; and through their intercession with Zeus he saw not corruption, but was changed into those bright stars that are called the Constellation of Orion unto this day.

But Artemis fled out of Delos that same hour, burning with wrath and maiden shame, and went overseas to find other hunting grounds, where the memory of that insult done her on Cynthus should not vex her heart. And as she went, the goddess called aloud on Earth, and the all-beholding Sun, and Zeus her Father to bear witness that she would live ever a virgin, for she had seen the ways of Love and they were utterly hateful to her. Zeus nodded assent on his golden throne, and thus was the lot she had chosen confirmed to her for ever. Three goddesses there are, and three only, who have no fellowship with the works of Aphrodite, but rather reprove them—sage Hestia, and warlike Athena, and Leto's queenly daughter.

Then Artemis came into the land of Greece, and to the fair oak-forests of Arcadia, home of wild beasts innumerable, both small and great; there she made her abode, and delighted herself in the chase. All the Nymphs of wood, fount, and stream came flocking to behold the divine maiden, and owned her for their Queen; and a joyous train of them followed her always when she went forth hunting, accoutred like their mistress with bow and quiver, tunics girt high, and buskins on their swift, slender feet. And in her honour they vowed one and all to live evermore chaste as she.

Fairest of that blithe, free sisterhood, and dearest to Artemis, was the Nymph Arethusa, of whose cold well-water the goddess loved to drink when heated with the chase. It chanced on a day of hunting that Arethusa was sundered from her companions, and, being wearied, sat down to rest on the bank of the eddying Alpheus. And the River-God, looking on her from his reedy bed, was enamoured of her loveliness; forth he sprang, in sight like a stalwart, broad-chested man, but with bull's horns peering from the shaggy curls on his forehead, and seized the Nymph in a fierce embrace. Vainly she struggled, in vain made all the vale ring with shrieks of "Save me, Artemis!" for by this Artemis and her train were far away. Yet the goddess heard, and answered; even as strong Alpheus dragged her down under his eddying wave, Arethusa's form dissolved into a clear, ice-cold streamlet, that mingled not with the river, but darted along his channel in arrowy flight towards the sea. Alpheus rushed after in torrent, dashing foam as of autumn floods upon his meadow banks; together they reached the salt, unplumbed sea, nor turned either from its bitter brine; on fled the streamlet through the dim green depths, and still the turbid River rolled after, like a brown water-snake in chase of a silver-coated fish. So came they underseas to the coasts of Sicily, that lovely land, and to the wide bay where Ortygia, the Islet of Quails, lies close inshore. And Arethusa sprang upward through the hidden bases of the islet, for the River pressed hard upon her; and as she came again into upper air,

behold, her own shape of Nymph was restored to her. But Alpheus followed close, and now had won the mastery, had she not cried once more to her Goddess to come and save her.

Then a great light shone over Ortygia, and in the midst thereof appeared the Huntress Queen, fair and terrible, with bent bow in hand. At that sight, the River-God shrank back amazed; sternly she frowned upon him, and said, "Depart hence, Alpheus, for the place whereon thou standest is holy unto me, Artemis, daughter of Zeus. Even now have I obtained of him this isle of Ortygia for a sanctuary, that I may give my true votaress a sure refuge from thy violence, thou ravisher of maidens! Avoid thee, therefore, and never more presume to molest follower of mine; else, divine though thou art, thou shalt rue too late such insolence towards me, when the fiery bolt of Zeus hath shrunk thy stream."

Then the River-God trembled and departed to his own place; but by command of Artemis, fair Arethusa remained in Ortygia as keeper of her new demesne. Where the Nymph had sprung up from the ground rose an ever-flowing Fount, clear as crystal; by this she dwelt, and it is called after her name unto this day. And in later ages, when Ortygia was become part of the great wealthy city of Syracuse, whose folk revered Queen Artemis above all divinities as their guardian Goddess, Arethusa had no mean share in the honours paid her mistress. But, as poets tell, she did not keep anger for ever against her wooer overbold; and he,

for his part, knew no rest for love of her, but fretted and pined, until at last he came stealthily to Ortygia—nor found the Nymph unrelenting. So, unknown to gods and men, he won bliss after long pain—

> "Divine Alpheus, that by secret sluice
> Stole under seas to meet his Arethuse."

At this time lived in Arcadia the savage King Lycaon, whom Zeus afterwards brought to a fearful end for his abominable crimes. Lycaon married many wives, and they bore him fifty sons, proud and bloody-minded as himself; but he had one daughter only, whom he cast out in the woods to perish as soon as she was born, deeming a girl-child not worth the rearing. But Artemis and her Nymphs found the babe and reared her with tender care; and they named her Callisto, that is, *Fairest*, for she was beautiful as an opening flower. And the Lady of the Wild Things caused a she-bear to suckle the child, which throve in wondrous wise, fed and cherished by that rough foster-mother. So the Nymphs in sport would call her "Little Bear."

When Callisto grew to maidenhood, she became the best-loved companion of Artemis, and vowed herself to perpetual chastity as a follower of the virgin Goddess. Well for her if she might have kept that vow, but the Fates willed otherwise. For so fair she was that King Zeus himself sought her love in secret; and what woman's heart is proof against the pleading of a god? Not Callisto's, at

least; and ere long Artemis marked with indignation the change in her favourite—

> "Gone were her maiden glee and sport,
> Her maiden girdle all too short."

Then thus in bitter wrath spoke the goddess to the trembling culprit, "Thou perfidious ingrate! Was it for this I reared thee, and have loved thee as a younger sister, that thou shouldst bring reproach upon my unsullied name by playing the wanton? Shall it be told of Artemis the undefiled that such as thou are of her fellowship? No, by the dread Water of Styx, that shall not be! Quit the shape of beauty thou so ill deservest, and take that of thy foster-mother the Bear; since with her milk, it seems, thou didst drink in the untutored passions of her kind."

So saying, Artemis upraised her unbent bow in act to strike; the terrified maiden strove to utter a plea for mercy, but no words came—only hoarse growling murmurs; aghast at her own voice, she turned and fled into the oakwood—and even as she ran the weird change deformed her limbs. For tripping in her headlong haste over an oak-root, she fell on hands and knees, nor rose again erect, but slunk away into covert a shaggy, four-footed thing. Such and so terrible was the vengeance of the goddess.

Not many moons after, certain goatherds of King Lycaon found a bear in a pitfall they had digged for roedeer, and to their great wonder she was suckling a man-child, a noble babe. Now when they would have speared the beast, their hearts

failed them for pity, so like a woman's were the beseeching eyes she turned on them; and finding her gentle, they brought her with her fosterling to the King. Little he thought that the bear was his own daughter and the goodly babe his grandson; but pleased with the marvel, he kept them both in his house. "This boy," said he, "will make a sturdy warrior an he lives, and we will let him keep this uncouth nurse until he can be weaned." But one day, when the child was near the time of weaning, Lycaon's servants came in much dismay to their lord, saying the bear was gone into the Forbidden Sanctuary with her nurseling. At that, the King snatched up a javelin and ran forth to slay them both; for the Forbidden Sanctuary was an ancient yew-tree grove, sacred to Cronus, wherein it was death for man or beast to set foot. But as Lycaon reached the low fence of the grove and took aim at the bear, a peal of thunder shook the sky, and Zeus in his own shape of majesty stood before the King, bidding him stay his hand. Then the god revealed to him how it was his own daughter he would have slain, and all that had befallen Callisto since he cast her out, a new-born babe, to perish. "For that foul deed, Lycaon," said Zeus, "and for many more that thou hast done, look for a reckoning hereafter; but now is the cup of thine iniquities not yet full." When he had thus spoken, thunder roared again, and all the grove blazed with lightning, insomuch that the King and all his servants fell on their faces and lay as dead men for terror.

Now when they came to themselves, the god had departed; and bear and child were likewise vanished out of the grove. For that day was the last of Callisto's earthly span; and that she whom once he loved might not see death or the grave, Zeus had changed her into one of the heavenly signs conspicuous above the rest, and known to countless generations of mortals as *The Great Bear*. But her little son Hermes brought by command of Zeus to his own mother, gentle Maia, to be reared in her cavern on steep Cyllene; he grew up strong, wise, and valiant, a chieftain of renown; and when the vengeance of Zeus had overtaken his grandsire Lycaon, he reigned long and gloriously in his stead. And from his name, *Arcas*, did the land that at first was called Pelasgia take the name of Arcadia. Nor did the wrath of great Artemis rest upon the Son of the Bear; but she had a favour unto him, prospering him all his days; and the House of Arcas ever worshipped her as their guardian goddess.

CHAPTER X

APHRODITE

"Idalian Aphrodite, beautiful,
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells."
Œnone.

When Cronus with his sickle shore from vast Uranus the root of virile strength, blood-drops from the wound sank deep into Earth's bosom; and out of those arose the dread Erinyes, the Avengers of Blood, in form like haggard women, but in nature like fleet, keen-scented sleuth-hounds, for tirelessly they follow the murderer's trail from the moment of his crime, and, viewless or in visible shape, hunt their maddened prey to his doom.

But that which Cronus had smitten off, he cast behind him, by command of Earth; and it fell into the Sea, where the waves tossed it to and fro for countless years, until at last it dissolved in foam, that went drifting like a snow-wreath across the blue Midland main. Then, when the reign of Cronus was ended, and the reign of Zeus begun, one sunny morn, when land and sea were swept by balms of Spring, there arose out of that Foam a golden-haired, smiling Goddess, more beautiful than heart can dream of or tongue can tell. And straightway all the Sea-dwellers came thronging

about her, enamoured of herloveliness; the daughters of old Nereus brought a wide-lipped, pearly shell to be her car, and drew it with their own white hands; the Tritons went before, blowing their conches merrily; seals and dolphins gambolled around her; and great whales with never-sleeping eye swam lazily after, along the charméd waves. The West Wind, sighing for love of her, wafted the Foamborn to the shores of Cyprus, where as yet was no city of men, but all the isle lay solitary, a wilderness of roses, myrtles, and blossoming apple-trees. There the flowery-kirtled Hours, daughters of Zeus and sovran Themis, received the new-born Immortal and gave her loving greeting; and because she had no covering but her deep, ambrosial hair, they made haste to adorn her, that she might appear with splendour in their Father's house, before the full-faced presence of the gods. So one clad her in raiment of celestial woof; another sleeked her tresses with a golden comb and bound them with a red rose garland. the third sister decked her small ears and slender throat and the polished argent of her breast with jewels rich and strange, wrought by hands divine in chrysolite and smaragd and faëry orichalch.

Now when the Olympians saw this Wonder led into the heavenly halls, they rose up with one mind to bid her welcome; the Muses raised a glad song of acclaim; Apollo struck festal harmony from his golden lute, and all the gods shouted for joy. Zeus himself seated the newcomer at his right hand, and asked by what name they should call her; and

smiling she answered, "I am APHRODITE," which is being interpreted, "the Foamborn." And the gracious Hours told how they had seen her rise out of the foam and move like a white star on the face of the waters, and had sped to meet and greet her on the Cyprian strand. Then the King of gods decreed that Aphrodite should be numbered henceforth with the Sky-Children, sharing their honours and prerogatives; and he gave her for dower the Isle of Cyprus, where she first set foot on earth; wherefore men call her the Cyprian unto this day.

From that hour, Aphrodite became the darling and delight of Zeus and his kindred; but ere long the sweet enchantress began to trouble their sacred calm, making them know the torments of desire; and too late they learned that her birthright is power over all hearts, wherein she kindles love-passion according to her capricious will. Queen is she also of all that ministers to love—dalliance and amorous parleyings, laughter and wanton wiles. And scarcely was she come among them when every god from the greatest to the least importuned Aphrodite to wed with him, for she had caught them all in her strong toil of grace, insomuch that Zeus himself would have put away his lawful Queen for her sake. But the Cyprian had no mind to wedlock, desiring rather to live free and seek pleasure where she listed; and she took for her lover neither beautiful Apollo nor wily Hermes, but Ares the War-God, illseen by the rest of Immortals because of his unruly violence. No gentle wooer he; yet he found favour with golden

Aphrodite, and she bore him one child, the maiden Harmonia.

After this, Hephaestus, the divine craftsman, won like favour with the goddess, and he built for her pleasure a bower of gold and amber, a miracle of cunning workmanship. But if the Olympians were displeased when the fairest among them chose wild Ares for bedfellow, they were filled with scornful wonder to see her housed with the lame, ungainly Smith-god; and many a jest and gibing laugh greeted the ill-matched pair whenever they took their places at the banquet of Zeus. Aphrodite heard with a smile on her lovely lips, but anger in her heart; and now she began to put forth her strength secretly against both gods and goddesses, resolved that the mockers should be humbled in their turn. First she essayed to beguile Hestia, of whom she caused Apollo and great Poseidon to become enamoured; but against that sage and holy goddess she could avail nothing. And two others there were who foiled the heavenly temptress through the might of chastity; even warrior Athena and Artemis the Huntress. These three have no part nor lot with Aphrodite, scorning her soft delights in their virgin pride; but of other Immortals there is not one she cannot boast to have subdued, then or thereafter. At this time especially she spared neither small nor great, and, to make her triumph the completer, she inflamed many with love for the sons and daughters of men.

One day, when the subtle Cyprian had long watched with silent glee the workings of her

enchantments, some jest merry Hermes flung at her set the gods laughing over their nectar until the hall rang again. Then up she stood, flushing rose-red for anger, and in no measured words taunted them every one with their love-follies; beginning with Zeus himself, she blazoned forth all their secret commercings with mortals—how this and that puissant god had played humble suitor to a woman —more than one proud goddess kept stolen tryst with a rustic lover. And having told all the tale, "Now laugh again if ye list, Olympians," she said, "yet methinks the laugh to-day is with Aphrodite; for know that all this was her work and none other's. Yea, 'twas I cast the love-glamour over you; and a sweet revenge I had for your fleers and floutings, as I marked divine faces grow passion-pale—heard love-lorn sighs from immortal lips—and all for some puny mortal's sake! Then — ha, ha, ha! — the strange shifts some of you were put to—thou, O Thunder, in especial, who didst not disdain to veil thy godhead under shape of beast or bird!"

More she would have said, but Zeus from under frowning brows darted upon her a glance terrible as the red lightning, bidding her be silent at her peril. Aphrodite durst not disobey; she cast one look, half mirth, half malice, on the crestfallen circle of the Olympians, and went laughing to her bower. And Hephaestus limped after; but the rest took counsel together how they might be avenged on Aphrodite for what she had done to them. Long was their debate; at last Zeus said, "I know a way to humble the Cyprian even as

she hath humbled us all, putting us to an open shame. Is not all power given unto me in heaven and on earth? Behold, I will wound the Queen of Love with her own weapons and make her likewise enamoured of a mortal; so shall she mock at us no more."

Now there lived at that time a king's son, by name Anchises, a youth of a beautiful countenance; and he herded his father's cattle on Mount Ida, in the Trojan land. And as Aphrodite roamed on earth one day, she saw the young herdsman, and straightway loved him, by the will of Zeus. Then the goddess hasted in her temple that is in Cyprus, and called the Three immortal Graces, Ladies of Poesy, Delight, and Mirth, who ever wait upon her; these bathed her sacred body and anointed it with precious balms, known only to the gods; after that, they put on her shining apparel, her jewels, and her fragrant zone, most potent of love-amulets. Thus adorned, she returned to many-fountained Ida.

And as she walked in beauty through the glens, the beasts of prey came fawning about her feet—bears and grey wolves, lions with flaming eyes and lissom pards, never-sated hunters of the deer. The goddess smiled well-pleased on those uncouth worshippers and shed soft desire into their fierce hearts, so that they slunk away to couch in their leafy lairs, each with his mate. Then on she fared to the upland lawns where stood the shieling of the herdsmen, well fenced about with timber to keep them and their kine safe from night-prowling beasts.

There she found beautiful Anchises all alone; for his comrades were gone with the cattle to the hill-pastures, but he in idle mood was pacing to and fro beside the empty byres, diverting himself with his harp. And Aphrodite stood before him in the guise of a tall, fair damsel, veiling the full radiance of her divinity lest it should trouble and confound him; nevertheless, the youth beheld her with awe and wonder, perceiving how she excelled the daughters of men in grace and beauty, and was arrayed more gloriously than any queen. For her robe, the colour of clear flame, was clasped with sapphires and girdled with rubies and fire-opals; her armlets were twining emerald snakes, her ear-rings, lily-cups of pearl; about her neck hung carcanets divinely wrought in beryl, topaz, jacinth; and between her breasts shone what seemed a crescent moon. Anchises knew this could be no mortal maiden, and accosted her with due reverence, for though young and simple he was of a great discretion.

"Hail, Queen," he said, "whosoever of the Blessed Ones thou art, that deignest to visit my lowly dwelling. Hail, by whatever name I should salute thee, whether Artemis, or Leto, or golden Aphrodite, or sovran Themis, or Athena of the glancing eyes. Or hearest thou rather, Aglaïa, or Euphrosyne, or Thalia, being one of the sister Graces, lovely ministrants to the high gods? Or art thou haply the Nymph of some fair grove, or spring, or flowery mead? Tell me thy name, that I may raise thee an altar on some far-seen hill-top

and honour thee evermore with offerings of choicest first-fruits. And be thou propitious to my prayers; granting me hereafter to win lordship and renown among the Trojans, and beget noble sons, and live in health and wealth to a good old age."

But Aphrodite answered with her lovely smile, "I am no goddess, fairest youth, nor guess why you should take me for one, who am of mortal flesh and blood, born of a woman. Listen, Prince Anchises—you see I know your name, though myself unknown to you—and you shall hear who and whence I am. Renowned Otreus is my father, King of all broad Phrygia; but I was reared by a Trojan foster-mother, so that your tongue is familiar to me as my own. Now this morn I went with a company of noble maidens to the temple of Artemis —for to-day is her festival; chanting we went, and all the folk of our city followed, garlanded and robed in white. Then, in full view of that multitude, Hermes of the Golden Wand swooped hawk-like on our maiden choir; the rest fled this way and that, but me he seized and bore aloft, swooning with terror. Over tilth and pasture, mountain and forest, he sped on wingéd feet that scarce brushed the ground, until he set me down hard by this steading, and bade me look on you as you paced to and fro. But you marked us not, being intent on your minstrelsy. And Hermes said, 'Be of good cheer, King's daughter; yon comely lad is Anchises, a prince of Troy, and I have brought you hither to be his wedded wife and the mother of his children, for pity it were two such fair creatures should not

mate.' So saying, the blithe god laughed and went his way; but I, thus left in helpless plight, was forced to seek speech with you. And now, gentle Anchises, I entreat you in the name of Zeus most high and of your noble parents—noble they needs must be, who have such offspring—do me no dishonour, but bring me, a maid unsullied, to your father's house. Then, if it please him and your lady mother to accept me for their daughter-in-law, and you yourself have any mind of me, let a swift messenger be sent with the tidings to my parents in distant Phrygia, who even now mourn their child as lost for ever. So shall they be comforted, and they will send back the messenger with a dowry of much fine gold and bridal raiment worthy a queen's wearing. And then you may hold a marriage feast so gay and splendid that both gods and men shall esteem you fortunate in wedlock."

Thus spoke the wily goddess, blushing like a modest maid, but her thoughts were other than her words. And the love-ardour that breathed from her swept like a fever through Anchises' veins; trembling, he seized her yielding hand, and cried, "Ah, if you tell me true—if indeed you are of mortal birth, and divine Hermes will have us wed—then neither god nor man shall stay me from making you mine this very hour. No, though I saw Archer Apollo bend his death-dealing bow against me, I would not tarry. For I were content even now to die and pass into Hades, so I might first possess you, O woman made in the image of the Heavenly Ones." And thereupon he led Aphrodite into the

herdsmen's lodge, and to his own couch, spread with warm, soft pelts of lion and bear, the spoils of his winter hunting. Coyly she followed, her lovely eyes downcast, the picture of a bashful bride, and made pretence of drawing back in maiden shamefastness. Yet she suffered him to unclasp her necklaces and bracelets and starry zone, and doff her radiant vesture; and all these he flung on a silver-studded chair at the bedside. Then, all unweeting, Anchises drank deep of pleasures that are the heritage of the deathless gods; for he, mortal though he was, lay breast to breast with an immortal lover.

But about the hour when kine come home for the milking, Aphrodite cast deep slumber upon him; then she arose and put on her glorious attire and panoply of jewels; and therewithal she took her true shape again. Her golden head well-nigh touched the low roof-beam; the purple light of Love suffused her cheek; fragrance as of violets streamed about her, and filled all the dwelling. In this guise, she bent over the sleeping youth and awoke him, saying, "Up, son of Trojan Dardanus! Why, what ails you to fall so fast asleep? Look up, and tell me now, seem I in all points the same as when you brought me under this roof?" And sweetly she laughed, glorying in her heart. The youth started up, but no sooner looked he on the eyes and neck of Aphrodite than he averted his gaze, dazzled and trembling; straightway he covered his face with his mantle and cried in tones of supplication, "Did I not know thee, Goddess,

for what thou art, the first moment I saw thee? Ah, wherefore didst thou beguile me with a tale untrue? Now by Zeus most high I beseech thee have mercy on me, and let not my strength consume away untimely. For I know full well, if a goddess couches with a mortal, he is unmanned and undone for ever."

Now at these words the glamour dissolved that Zeus had cast over Aphrodite, and she knew she was taken in the snare she had laid for others. A sigh broke from her, yet not to Anchises bore she any grudge; and she answered him mildly: "Fear not, my lovely boy, for there shall no evil happen to you through me, nor through any of the Immortals. Nay, dear to us are you and your kindred, because of all sons of men your race is likest unto us in beauty. Was not yellow-haired Ganymede caught up of Zeus into the heavenly palaces to be his minion, whom the gods joy to look upon as he fills their cups with the ruby nectar, so wondrous fair he is? Did not enamoured Dawn carry away Tithonus, yet a lad, to the chambers of the East, and prevail with Zeus to grant him immortality? Ah, thoughtless goddess, she forgot to ask therewithal eternal youth for her lover, and the days came when she had no more pleasure in him; for we, the ever young, abhor age and grey hairs. So she keeps him prisoner in her roseate bowers, lest the gods, seeing him, should deride her; and there he must dwindle, peak, and pine for ever, the shrunken shadow of what he was. Not so will I deal with you, Anchises; better far for you and for me that

you should die like other men in your destined hour. But know, you have been no less highly favoured than these your kinsmen; for your lover is Aphrodite the Foamborn."

Then Anchises was the more afraid, and he said to her, "O Queen, mighty in earth and heaven, now know I assuredly that I am but a lost man from this hour. For it will irk thee, who art so glorious and so great, to remember what thou hast given to the herdsman of Ida; lightly then thy love will turn to hatred, and thou wilt destroy me for that which I did unwittingly. Alas, good were it for me if I had not been born."

But the goddess answered, smiling, "Be of good cheer, son of Dardanus; said I not there shall no harm befall you at my hands? Nay, from me shall come to you the blessing all men desire—a son gallant and goodly, to be the pride of your manhood and staff of your old age. Moreover, he shall be great among the princes of Troy, and found a kingdom in a land beyond the sea, where the posterity of Anchises shall reign through generations yet to come. But call his name Aeneas, that is, *Sorrowful*, for in sorrow I must bear him; ay, not without anguish comes motherhood even to a goddess, when the life beneath her breast springs from mortal seed! Now, I will give the babe to the Dryads of this mountain; the lovely Fays that inhabit each a pine-tree or spreading oak, living while it lives and dying when it falls. These shall be his nurses, and in his fifth year I myself will bring you your little son. Then, if any man ask

you who she was that bore you so noble a child, take heed you say to him, 'She is one of the fair Dryads that haunt many-fountained Ida.' But if in overweening pride you boast of having mated with Cyprian Aphrodite, the thunderbolt of Zeus shall lay you low. Be wise, therefore, and keep all that has passed between us in your heart, remembering that the high gods are very jealous for their honour among men, nor will brook irreverence towards any of their fellowship. Farewell, and prosper, for so you shall if you offend them not by rash vaunts concerning me."

Having thus spoken, Aphrodite went her way heavenward. Anchises kept silence as she had bidden him; and all her word was fulfilled to him in the after time.

The Legend of Adonis

The first king that reigned in Cyprus was Cinyras, a prince of Phoenicia, who came thither from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon with a band of followers, seeking new homes because there was a famine in their own land. When they saw how fair and fruitful was Aphrodite's Isle, they builded them a city there by the sea, and a goodly harbour, in the place where the goddess had first set foot after she rose from the waves. And she revealed herself to Cinyras in a dream by night, bidding him raise a temple to her in his new city, for that should bring much good to him and his folk. Cinyras joyfully obeyed the heavenly vision, for he was the most

pious of men; moreover, he dedicated himself and all his household to the service of the goddess, and ministered as priests in the great temple he builded. Nor lacked he his reward; for Aphrodite prevailed with Zeus and all the gods to shower their blessings upon him, insomuch that whatever he did prospered, and he became rich in silver and gold, flocks and herds, corn, oil, and wine, above all princes of the earth. The gods granted him also a reign of unbroken peace; so he dwelt happy many years, a blameless king, beloved of all his people for his mildness and justice. But as bliss unmixed with bale is not ordained for any mortal, a dire calamity overtook him in the height of his prosperity.

For Cinyras was as beautiful in person as he was virtuous in mind, and his beauty fired with unnatural love the heart of Myrrha, his daughter. She, having long pined in secret, came to his chamber one night, when the Queen was gone to keep the Feast of Demeter with the matrons of the city; and feigning to be one of Aphrodite's temple-slaves, she gained her impious desire. But when it was day, Cinyras saw that she was Myrrha; and in rage and horror he drew sword to slay her, and pursued her out of the chamber into the gardens of his palace. There, even as he overtook the fleeing maiden, she flung herself on her knees, entreating succour of Aphrodite; the goddess heard, and immediately Myrrha vanished, and where she had stood appeared a blossoming myrtle. When Cinyras saw that miracle, he feared greatly, and gave praise to Aphrodite, who had delivered her servant from

bloodguiltiness; he set a fence about the tree, and reared an altar beside it, and the goddess made known to him by a dream that the myrtle should henceforth be sacred to her among trees, as the apple is among fruits, and the rose among flowers.

It came to pass about nine months thereafter, as the king was burning incense on the altar by the myrtle-tree, that the stem opened suddenly and there dropped from it a lovely babe, white as its fragrant blossoms. This wondrous child was reared in Aphrodite's temple, and dedicated to her from his birth; and he grew up the most beautiful youth that ever the sun looked upon; in form and face like to the immortal gods, with long and lustrous curls, eyes of darkest violet, and a skin all lily and rose. The Paphians paid him honours scarcely less than a god's, because of his surpassing beauty, and they called him in their tongue ADONIS, that is "Lord."

Now Adonis had great delight in hunting; and in Spring time he was wont to range the woodlands, with none but his good hounds for company, chasing the dappled deer. There, on a day, Queen Aphrodite met him, accoutred like a huntress; and feigned herself a Nymph that had strayed from the train of virgin Artemis, while they were following the chase over the Cyprian hills. But by her downward smile and sidelong glance, Adonis perceived her to be no strict votaress of the silver-shafted goddess; and they had not long talked together when her sighs and blushes spoke to him more eloquently than words can do. He took her flower-soft hand and brought her, nothing loth, into a

leafy dell; and as they laid them down, their mossy couch bloomed with rich inlay of violet, crocus, hyacinth, and clouds of incense streamed from their canopy of beechen green. So Adonis knew that she who embraced him was a goddess, and he would have fled from her in fear; but sweetly she laughed, and said to him, "Why wilt thou fly me, Adonis? Behold, I am no stranger, but thy liege lady, Cyprian Aphrodite, whom thou hast served from a child . . . and who is fain to pay even now the wage she owes thee . . . in her own coin." Then the youth forgot his fears; and they two took their fill of love and love's disport, both then and many another day.

Now after a time, word came to Adonis of a great wild boar that was ravaging the hill-country about Byblos, in the land of Syria; and forthwith he went overseas in quest of the monster, albeit Aphrodite entreated him to forbear that chase, saying her heart misgave her strangely that it would prove his last. But the wilful youth was not to be persuaded; for as sweetest fare will soonest cloy, he began to be aweary of soft dalliance, though his playfellow was Love's immortal Queen. So lightly he took leave of her and went his way—to return no more to pleasant Cyprus and his father's house.

For when he roused the great boar from his lair in a fenny brake, hard by a river, the furious beast came charging down upon his hunter; Adonis hurled his spear, but it only grazed his bristled shoulder; on he thundered, foam flying from his

jaws, and buried his sharp, gleaming tushes in the lad's snowy thigh. Then, as if remorse had touched his brute heart to have destroyed a creature so lovely, the boar stood quietly beside his prostrate victim, until one came hurrying to the place, crying on the name of Adonis, at sight of whom he turned and fled like a guilty thing. For it was Queen Aphrodite, dread to see in her wrath and grief divine. She flung herself down by her dying love, complaining loud and bathing him with tears, as vainly she strove to stanch the crimson torrent that gushed from his gaping wound. "Ah, hapless one," she cried, "why would'st thou not heed my warning? Too true was my foreboding—I knew it, and overcome by dread I followed thee hither—alas, too late! O my Adonis, my fairest love, thou must not, shalt not die—I cannot lack thee, in whom is all my joy. Speak, look up—'tis thine Aphrodite, thy faithful lover implores thee!"

But when the goddess saw she could avail nothing and Adonis was about to yield up the ghost, she kissed his closed eyelids and departed from him, weeping sore; for the Immortals cannot abide the presence of Death, whose shadow casts eclipse on the white radiance of their divinity. Then up she sped to the heavenly halls, and stood in tears before the throne of Zeus, and prayed him, if ever her secret rites had been sweet to him, that he would restore life to her beloved. And Zeus answered, moved with compassion, "Fain would I grant thy request, Cyprian Aphrodite, for through thy works have I tasted much bliss heretofore. But now is

thine Adonis thrall to Queen Persephone, who hath caused Death to bring him body and soul into her shadowy mansions, that she may delight her eyes with his beauty. There lies he in trancéd slumber, wearing yet his form of flesh and blood among spirits disembodied. This, then, I will do for thy sake—I will bid Hades' Queen release her prisoner unto thee for the half of every year, when the time of the singing of birds is come, and the vine puts forth her tendrils. So shalt thou enjoy thy lovely paramour all summer long; but at the fall of the leaf he must return into the Underworld."

Now as Zeus promised, so it came to pass; and in after ages, all folk that worshipped the Cyprian goddess celebrated with each returning Spring the death and resurrection of her Adonis. On the first day of his Feast, the slain youth's effigy was laid on a silver bier, carried in funeral procession to the sea-shore, and cast into the waves with dirges and lamentations; but the next day was given over to revelry, chambering, and wantonness, in honour of Aphrodite's re-union with her darling. And the revellers crowned themselves with garlands of the scarlet anemone; for that flower, white of yore, received its vermeil tinct from the blood of wounded Adonis.

CHAPTER XI

DIONYSUS

" And as I sat, over the light blue hills
There came a noise of revellers; the rills
Into the wide stream came of purple hue—
'Twas Bacchus and his crew!
The earnest trumpet spake, and silver thrills
Of kissing cymbals made a merry din—
'Twas Bacchus and his kin!
Like to a moving vintage down they came,
Crowned with green leaves, and faces all on flame. . . ."

Endymion.

I

CADMUS, King of Thebes, was renowned among men for valour, prudence, and piety; but above all for the wondrous favour shown him by the gods, who had allied him to themselves in marriage, bestowing on him the hand of Aphrodite's daughter, lovely Harmonia. The Lords of Heaven and Sea, with the whole company of the Olympians, came to the marriage feast in Thebes, and the divine Muses raised the bridal song. But the prosperity of mortal man continues never in one stay; and that proved true even of this highly favoured hero, who saw the gods sit as guests in his hall and had the Queen of Love's own child for bedfellow. Nay, that splendid marriage brought strange sorrows upon him, as this tale will show.

Four daughters were born to Cadmus and Har-

monia, and all were beautiful; but the youngest, whose name was Semele, outshone the rest as the moon outshines the stars, so that her sisters envied her in their hearts. Well they might, for Semele in her maiden bloom had not her peer among daughters of men, no, nor of the gods. And therewithal she was gentle as a dove, full of courtesy and gracious ways, beloved of high and low in Thebes; which made the three elder sisters, who were proud, disdainful, and headstrong, hate her all the more.

Now it came to pass ere long that the innocent maiden's beauty raised against her a foe more powerful than they of her own household—even Hera, Queen of Gods. For Zeus looked on sweet Semele and loved her; and coming to her bower by night, wooed her in his own majestic shape; yet he veiled the full glory of his godhead, which no mortal may behold and live. And Semele yielded with trembling rapture to the divine lover's embrace; nor once only, for he visited her many a time and oft in the silent night. But his comings were not hid from jealous Hera; and she meditated revenge. Then, having thought on a device, the goddess came to Semele in the likeness of her old nurse, and said, " Child, I know—never ask me how —that you have a lover in secret, who calls himself the King of Gods. But my fear is you are deceived by some impious mortal, who hath dared to impersonate the god, to gain his will of you. Now therefore, if you would not be brought to shame, take my counsel. Ask your lover this night to prove he is very Zeus by appearing to you in all

the glory he wears when he enters Queen Hera's golden bride-chamber."

The simple-minded maid took that counsel, to her own undoing; when Zeus came, she craved a boon of him, and he promised to grant her what she would. Then she named her request, and sadly the god answered, "Ah, thou of little faith, hadst thou not proof enough? But be it unto thee even as thou wilt, since gods themselves are thralls to their word once given." And immediately the palace of Cadmus shone all ablaze with lightnings, and shook with the crash of thunder, peal on peal; and Semele's bower was wrapped in smoke and flame as the Thunderer stood before her, grasping his all-dreaded bolt. Sheer terror bereft that gentle one of life or ever the devouring fire scorched her tender flesh — but her death-throe gave untimely birth to a living son. Nor did Zeus suffer his offspring to perish, but snatched him from the burning couch, his mother's funeral pyre, and in wondrous wise preserved the life he had given. For within the hollow of the god's thigh was the babe enclosed, as in the chamber of the womb, until he was ripe for birth.

Then Zeus gave his son, the Twice-born, to Hermes, with charge to bring him to the Nymphs of Mount Nysa, that they might rear him in their secret dells, unespied of jealous Hera. Now where that holy mountain is no man knows; but inspired bards tell that it is in the far lands of Asia, some say in India; and that it is a garden of the gods, clothed with all manner of pleasant trees, with

groves of frankincense and with the purple-clustered vine. Soft showers continually refresh its verdure, and the Nymphs that dwell there are called *Hyades*, Ladies of the Rain. These brought up the son of Semele in their hallowed haunts, nourishing him with divine ambrosia, and they named him Dionysus, from Zeus his father and Nysa his home.[1] But in after days he revealed himself to mortals by many names besides, and chiefly by that of *Bacchus* did his worshippers call upon him.

Now when Dionysus came to the bloom of his youth, and felt the godhead within him as it were fire in his veins, he set forth Westward from Nysa, attended by the Mountain Nymphs, his first votaresses; and he journeyed through all the Asian lands, and along the Euxine shores, and so into Thrace, making for Thebes where he was born. For by the secret purpose and ordinance of Zeus, the young god had devised a twofold boon for mortals: even his holy mysteries, that bring joys that cannot be uttered to such as approach them with clean hands and a pure heart; and therewithal the gift of the vine, that as yet grew only on sacred Nysa. And Dionysus was fain to bring these gifts to his birthplace, and manifest his divinity to the Thebans first of all folk in Hellas, for the honour of his sweet mother's name.

Wherever he came upon that journey—to Lydia rich in gold, to Phrygia and blest Arabia, and the lands of the Medes and Persians—there he planted the vine, and brought the fiery juice of the grape,

[1] Διός=of Zeus.

the strengthener of man's heart; all the nations of the East were glad of him, and their women flocked to join the company of his votaresses, and many followed him as he went in a revel-band, dancing along to the merry noise of flutes, cymbals, and tabors.

But when the God and his train appeared among the stormy hills of Thrace, the king of that land heard of it, and went forth to meet them with his spearmen. This king, Lycurgus by name, was of savage nature, delighting in violence and bloodshed; and he kept a breed of horses as savage as himself, whom he fed on raw flesh, that they might be the fiercer, and fall upon his enemies in battle like beasts of prey, rending them with their teeth. Now Lycurgus had heard that a son of Zeus was come into his country with a troop of followers, and he looked to behold some mighty warrior, leader of armed men. So when he saw that the new god was but a soft-cheeked youth, white-skinned and slender as a girl, with rich, dark curls, clad in a flowing robe, and weaponless save for an ivy-wreathed wand; when he saw, moreover, that his followers were women—the grim king utterly despised him. And in fierce disdain he caught up an ox-goad that lay by the wayside, and rushing upon the defenceless band he drove them before him, threatening to throw them all to his flesh-eating horses unless they should get them gone out of his land upon the instant. Terror-stricken the gentle Nymphs and the Asian women fled into the mountains, nor could young Bacchus, they say,

abide the Thracian's furious onslaught, but in sore affright plunged into the neighbouring sea, where Thetis, silver-footed queen, received him in her arms, as one whom his mother comforteth. But not long did King Lycurgus live to boast his triumph; for Zeus sent madness upon him, and therewithal destroyed the sight of his eyes; and miserably he perished, being devoured of his own horses. Truly, not for long may he escape sheer destruction, who wars against the gods!

Now as for the Nymphs of Nysa, Zeus translated them forthwith to the skies, and changed them into the star-group called the *Hyades*, whose rising heralds the autumn rains. Such honour everlasting had the divine Nurses of Bacchus.

And as for the Asian women, the god returned to them anon, as they wandered disconsolate in the Thracian mountains; but now for his own purposes he caused their eyes to be holden that they should not know him; and though he kept his true shape, they deemed him a certain Lydian youth who had followed them awhile on their march through his country. The seeming Lydian told the women that Dionysus had sent him to be their guide and escort to Thebes, "For there first," said he, "the God wills us to celebrate his blessed rites on the soil of Hellas. There, in his own native home, you shall see him again, manifesting forth his glory before King Cadmus and his house and all the Theban folk."

When the women heard that, they were glad, and straightway they set out upon their march,

guided by the Lydian Stranger. As they journeyed on by mountain and forest, the Oread Nymphs and the lovely Dryads and the shaggy, goatfoot Satyrs came trooping to greet the Handmaids of Bacchus, and brought them on their road with laughter and with song and wild sweet pipings, that all the woodlands rang to their merry din. For all those children of Earth knew well who was come among them, being clearer-eyed to discern the gods than any child of man. And Southward ever fared the god with his train, through Pieria, home of the Muses, and wide Thessaly, and the lands that towering Parnassus overshadows, on to the banks of Ismenus and seven-gated Thebes.

II

Now Cadmus was by this time stricken in years and feeble; and he no longer held sway over Thebes, but by reason of age and infirmity had yielded the name and power of king to the young Pentheus, son of his eldest daughter Agave. This princess with her sisters Ino and Autonoe were a grief of mind to their aged father, in that they spared not to revile the memory of hapless Semele as a wanton, nay, worse, as a blasphemer against Zeus, who had destroyed her for that very cause. For when they had perceived their sister to be with child, they had accused her to their father; and Semele, being questioned, had told him all the truth; nor did Cadmus find it in his heart to doubt her word, until the hour when the flaming thunderbolt

consumed her and—as it seemed—her unborn babe. Then, indeed, all his mind was clouded with a doubt; and the three princesses, unsoftened by their sister's cruel fate, gave out openly that she had reaped the due reward of her wickedness in daring to father upon Zeus her offspring by some nameless, low-born lover. Thus for many years the name of gentle Semele had been held in reproach among her own kindred and the folk of Thebes. And when Pentheus became master in the palace of his grandsire, he forbade that name to be made mention of any more in the household rites, denying both to the ill-starred mother and her babe any share in the libations and prayers wherewith the Dead are honoured by their living kinsfolk.

All the greater, therefore, was the astonishment of the young king when, on returning to Thebes one day from visiting his outlying demesnes, he found the whole city in a tumult over the coming of certain strangers, worshippers of a new god, whom they proclaimed as Bacchus, *Son of Semele.* These aliens, he was told, were about fifteen in number; women all, except their leader, a beautiful, rose-cheeked youth; all were attired in the Lydian fashion, with gay, flowing robes and parti-coloured headbands; but they were decked out besides in fantastic guise, having fawnskins girt about them, and wreaths of ivy on their heads; their feet were bare, and they carried long wands swathed with ivy and tipped with fir-cones. As they entered the city with dancing steps, some beat tambourines, others clashed silver cymbals, and to this wild

music they chanted shrilly-sweet the praises of their god, calling on young and old to come and worship him upon the mountains. The menfolk had looked half in wonder, half in scorn, on the outlandish revel-rout; but the women no sooner beheld and heard them than they seemed possessed by some god-sent frenzy, and rushed with one accord to the neighbouring heights of Cithaeron, like a herd of flying deer. And, strangest of all, Agave the queen-mother and her sisters had led their frantic flight! In the confusion and uproar of their departing, the Lydian women and their leader had disappeared unremarked, but doubtless they also had made for Cithaeron, there to celebrate the rites of this strange god along with his new votaresses.

Pentheus heard these tidings with indignation, and commanded his bodyguard of spearmen to go forthwith to the mountain and drive those deluded women home again; but first and foremost to make prisoner of the Lydian stranger who had manifestly bewitched them, and bring him to the palace with all speed. "This is some impudent juggler," said he, "some cozening vagabond who lives by practising on women's weakness—credulous, superstitious fools as they are! But I will make such an example of him that no more of his evil tribe shall ever dare bring their tricks and mummeries within my borders." So saying, he went up hastily to the citadel, where stood the fair-walled palace that Cadmus had builded what time by help of the gods he founded sacred Thebes.

Now even as the king approached its stately

portal, the lofty folding doors opened and two aged men came forth, at sight of whom he stood transfixed by anger and amazement. For they were his grandsire and the blind Seer Teiresias, priest of Apollo; and both wore those very trappings which the citizens had described to him as the livery of the Bacchus-worshippers. Ivy garlands crowned the white head of Cadmus and hid the priestly fillet on Teiresias' brow; each was girt with the fawnskin, walked barefoot, and grasped a light ivy-wreathed wand in lieu of his staff. Almost doubting his own eyes, Pentheus drew aside as the pair, arm in arm, slowly and carefully descended the broad steps into the palace courtyard, that he might overhear their talk.

"Dear and honoured friend," Cadmus was saying in the quavering tones of age, "right glad was I to hear your voice—that voice ever fraught with wisdom—summoning me forth even now. For I was ready—waiting eagerly—I had had your message, you see! Ay, and obeyed it promptly—look whether I be not arrayed at all points as you bade me—accoutred meetly for the service of the god? Ay, for seeing he is my own daughter's child, the more reason I should magnify him to the utmost of my power! Now, whither go we? Where is the appointed place of hallowed revel? Lead on, wisest Teiresias—you that, though eyeless, need never a guide to your feet, such inward seeing have you by grace of Apollo. For my part, I feel new life in every limb; methinks I shall tread a measure and wave the ivied thyrsus with the best!

Aha, we will revel it bravely, old friend, and forget our years."

"I, too," answered the deeper voice of Teiresias, "feel in body and soul as it were a renewal of youth. But come, let us set forward to Cithaeron."

"Cithaeron?" exclaimed the other. "Why, if that is our bourne, we should do more wisely, perhaps, to travel in my mule-car, rather than on foot."

"But we should show less reverence towards the god," replied Teiresias; "be of good courage, my friend, for he will make the long road short to us that seek him, and the rough places plain."

"Have with you, then," said Cadmus, "but—do we go alone? Has Bacchus found no man in all Thebes to worship him but us two—and we so old and frail?"

He spoke dejectedly; for he was ever one that set store by the judgment of the many, and loved to have their good word; and to learn that none of the citizens shared his faith in the new god was cold water upon the fire of his zeal. But Teiresias, knowing him of old, read his thoughts, and answered, "We go alone, indeed, royal Cadmus; for we are the only wise men in a city of fools. Wherefore should that cast down your spirits? Aged we are, and feeble—but with this god young and old find equal acceptance. There are but two of us; but I tell you our homage shall be as precious in his sight as that of a multitude; for his glory is exalted by the faith, not the numbers, of his worshippers. Come, then, let us hasten to do him service in his appointed place and way."

Then Cadmus took heart again; and the two old men were hurrying across the courtyard when Pentheus strode before them with frowning brow and an angry flush upon his cheek.

"Grandsire," he said, "I am filled with shame to find you thus—lost to all sense of the dignity that should accompany old age—tricked out like some wretched mountebank—a very laughing-stock! Off with those garlands, I charge you, and fling down that bauble you are flourishing! What, have you no prudence left, no decency, that you would flaunt before all Thebes the ancient, half-forgotten scandal of our royal house? Know you not this Bacchus, this pretended god, is alleged by his votaries to be none other than your daughter's son—yes, the babe whom Zeus destroyed unborn together with frail Semele, in wrath because she impiously fathered it on him? But enough; you are but the tool of another—the dupe of priest-craft, ever on the watch to profit by such credulity as yours, and such impostures as this Lydian rogue's!"

Fiercely, then, he turned to Teiresius, and with bitter contempt, "Ay, soothsayer, 'tis plain enough what your end is, in misguiding the old man thus. You would foist a new god upon us in mere greed of gain—the more new altars, the more your fees for divining at the sacrifices. *I* know you, most rapacious of your lucre-loving tribe! Your grey hairs protect you, priest, else you should taste of chains and a dungeon along with your foreign confederates, as a bringer-in of abominable rites.

to the corrupting of the citizens. For already I have heard enough of those so-called mysteries to know that they are a mere cloak for drunkenness and unbridled lewdness."

"Blaspheme not, young man," replied Teiresias solemnly, "but hear me, and take a warning ere it be too late. It is revealed unto me by Apollo, Lord of Truth, that a mighty god is come this day among us, one whose name shall be highly exalted in all the lands of Hellas. Yea, for as men bless great Demeter for her gift of the bread by which they live, so shall they adore Bacchus for his gift of the wine that maketh glad their hearts, bringing them forgetfulness of toil and carking cares. As for his mystic rites, thus much only may be told to the uninitiate—that to the pure they are pure; Dionysus compels not his women votaries to chastity, but she that is chaste of nature will keep herself unspotted through his wild and midnight orgies. Now, though it seem to you impossible of belief, this god is in very truth the son of Semele, begotten of Zeus; who snatched him yet unripe for birth out of the flames that consumed her, and preserved him in wondrous wise. For sewn within the hollow of his father's thigh the babe received his perfect moulding, and thence sprang fully-formed to light. Therefore hath he the mystic name *Dithyrambos*, which signifies that twice he brake through the doors of birth. And so is he human and divine; born of a woman yet born of supreme godhead; himself not least, though latest come, among the heaven-dwelling gods. Such is the whole truth

concerning Bacchus-Dionysus, as Apollo hath given me to know it. Beware, then, O Pentheus, how you resist him or persecute his followers under colour of zeal for virtue and good order; and be not wise in your own conceit, lest haply your wisdom be found folly in the sight of the gods."

During this harangue the young king was restrained in spite of himself by the grave authority in the Seer's voice and mien; he now seemed about to make angry rejoinder, but his grandsire, who had listened with signs of devout admiration, eagerly took the word.

"Ah, child," he exclaimed, "Teiresias gives you right good counsel. Heed it, I pray you, and keep with us, within the time-honoured bounds of piety, instead of going your own wilful way. For see you now, the course you deem politic is childish impolicy! Even if Dionysus be, as you hold, no god, *you* should affirm that he is—telling a glorious lie for the credit of our house. Think how illustrious our name will become throughout Hellas if 'tis believed that Semele's babe was divine! Be persuaded, my son; go with us and pay homage openly to the new god, and first let me wreathe your head with ivy, his chosen badge."

So saying, the ancient took the garland from his own head and made to crown Pentheus therewith; but he, starting back, burst out in tones of fury, "Hands off, dotard! Think not to contaminate *me* with the signs and tokens of your drivelling idiocy! O, 'tis past bearing—get you gone to your mumming, old man, ere I forget what is due to the

father of my mother! Out of my sight, both of you, I say, before I lose all patience—but you, Teiresias, more knave than fool, you shall have cause to remember this day's work and rue it. For I will send men this very hour to cut down that pleasant grove where you love to sit watching the birds, and overturn your marble augur's chair, and root up your shrubs and flowers—ha, ha, I know there is no loss you would feel more keenly! Away, and think yourself happy not to share the doom of your accomplice, the Lydian, whom my guards shall stone to death when they have caught him."

Then old Cadmus wrung his hands, and crept closer to Teiresias, in dumb dismay; but the Seer put an arm about him, and spoke calmly and sadly; "Let us go, old friend, and pray fervently to the god to have mercy on this madman, and on the city he rules. Rightly, I fear, was he named *Pentheus*—'the sorrowful'—for I am the more deceived, O Cadmus, if he bring not sorrow upon thine house. Not by mine art I forebode it, but from his words and acts that witness all too plainly to a mind diseased."

With these words he led the old king away, guiding his feeble steps like one that sees his path clear before him; such magic virtue had the staff whereon he leaned, Apollo's gift. But Pentheus strode into the palace, calling loudly to his household slaves to go and make havoc of the Seer's place of augury.

While the king was yet giving his commands, a sound of tramping feet and rattle of grounded spear-

butts brought him hurrying back into the court-yard; there, as he hoped, he found his guards just returned with the captured hierophant, who was standing bound in their midst—a youth with languishing, dark eyes, rich ebon curls, and cheeks whose delicate bloom outvied the rose. Crowned with ivy, a fawnskin clasped with golden clasps over his white shoulders, a saffron-hued robe trailing to his feet, he stood quietly among his captors, his red lips parted in a faint, enigmatic smile.

Then said the captain of the guards, "O King, here is the quarry you sent us forth to hunt—a gentle beast, in sooth, for right willingly he suffered us to bind him; yea, no whit paler grew his ruddy cheek, but laughing he bade us clasp on the gyves and lead him before you. Thereat I was abashed, and said to him, 'Stranger, not of my own will do I take you prisoner, but by command of Pentheus, my master.' Now, when we came back to the city, we heard that certain women whom the Thebans had already caught and put in ward at your behest were escaped, and gone in mad career to Cithaeron, the prison doors having flown open of their own accord. And we are persuaded that this man, be he who he may, is a worker of signs and of wonders —but how to deal with him belongs to your care, not ours."

"Unbind him, first," said Pentheus, imperiously, "he will not now escape me with all his cunning, fettered or unfettered." Then, as the guards hastily obeyed, he scanned the youth with contemptuous eyes from head to foot, and thus accosted him:

"So, stranger, you are not uncomely, I find; the better for the purpose that brings you to Thebes, of inveigling women into frailty! Those long, curled tresses, and that white skin, bespeak you no lover of manly sports, but one of Aphrodite's courtiers, sedulous to keep his dainty fairness from sunburn. Now, to begin my inquiry in due form —what is your country?"

"I come from Mount Tmolus," replied the Stranger, "that is near Smyrna's rich city, in the land of Lydia."

"Ay, so I heard," said Pentheus; "and how dare you, Lydian, smuggle in your outlandish rites among us of Hellas?"

"I must fulfil the will of the god I serve," calmly answered the Stranger; "even Dionysus, son of Zeus."

"Son of Zeus?" exclaimed the King with a sneer. "But the sons of Olympian Zeus the Thunderer we know, and none of them bears that name. Have you barbarians a Zeus of your own, then, who begets new godlings for you?"

"Not so," said the other, unmoved, "I speak of that same Zeus who wedded Semele in the once fair chamber that lies yonder in ruins." He pointed to an ivy-mantled heap of stones in a corner of the courtyard with a fence about them; and added as if to himself, "Cadmus did piously and well to enclose that sacred spot."

"Enough!" cried Pentheus. "You have your lying tale pat, I see. Yonder, indeed, Zeus visited that sinful maiden—but in wrath, not love. Look

again—you will see tongues of lurid fire flickering among the ivy; they rise from the thunderbolt that smoulders unquenchably beneath, for a witness to her crime and chastisement! . . . But since by deeds rather than words a man should be judged, answer me this: with what manner of rites do you worship this Bacchus of yours?"

"It is not lawful for me to describe them," said the Stranger; "they are mystic, not to be revealed save to those who undergo a solemn initiation—least of all to a declared enemy of the god. Yet, believe me, they are worth your knowledge, King."

"Oh, ay, the common trick of you mystery-mongers," scoffed Pentheus, "making a parade of secrecy to draw curious fools into your net! Well, have at you again—this god who has manifested himself to you, under what form did he appear?"

"He assumed the shape—it pleased him to assume," replied the youth, carelessly; "why ask me that? *I* did not choose it for him."

"Do you shuffle with me, impudent vagabond?" exclaimed the King; "you will not shuffle yourself out of my keeping, I promise you, until you have paid dearly for your knaveries."

"Why, what evil have I done?" said the other. "Wherefore would you punish me—and how?"

"You shall learn soon enough," said Pentheus, eyeing him malevolently; "to begin with, I will have those dainty curls cropped off——"

"No, not that! My unshorn hair is dedicate to the god," broke in the Stranger; but Pentheus went on unheeding—

"—and stripped of all that gay gear you shall lie manacled in a dungeon——"

"The god will set me free," again interrupted the Lydian, in a tone of quiet confidence.

"Will he so?" said the King, smiling grimly. "Call on him, then, cry aloud, and let us see whether he will come and save you—but I doubt he is too far away to hear—or heed."

The youth's low, sweet voice sank to a thrilling whisper as he replied, "O Pentheus, he is not far, but near—now, even very now, Bacchus is with us, beholding what you do unto his servant."

"Let him show himself, then," cried Pentheus with a reckless laugh. "Where is he hiding, that I cannot see him?"

"He stands . . . close beside me," spoke the still voice again, "but your eyes are holden because of your wilful unbelief."

At these words the King, whom his prisoner's immovable serenity under his threats and taunts had gradually and strangely wrought to a mood bordering on frenzy, no longer controlled himself. "Seize this insolent fellow, guards," he shouted, "chain him hand and foot and thrust him into the dark underground cell at the rear of the stables. Ha, ha, let him caper there, if he can, to his god's honour! Must I bid twice? Drag him hence, I say!"

The guards hesitated, exchanging uneasy glances; but the Servant of Bacchus said with calm dignity, "Let no man lay hand on me, for of mine own free will I go to the house of bondage. Nevertheless,

O tyrant, know that the god whose being you deny will visit this outrage upon you; for inasmuch as you do it unto me, you do it unto him."

So saying, he walked with quick, light tread towards the low-browed gateway on the left of the palace-front. "See, he knows the way," whispered one of the guards to another, as they reluctantly followed. "Ay," returned his mate, "'tis a strange business—would we were well out of it! What ails our Lord to speak and look so wildly? Marked you that he never took his eyes from the stranger, but kept staring at him like one bewitched?"

Left alone, the King began striding to and fro with uncertain gait, muttering to himself; then, as by an overmastering impulse, hurried to the stable gateway. But just as he reached it, a shrill, plaintive chant rose behind him; he turned, and saw a band of women entering the court, habited and adorned like the Lydian, whose jet-black tresses and olive skins showed they too were of Eastern race. "Aha," he cried, "the juggler's minions come in search of him! Yes, he is here, fond damsels, but you will not find him—I have him safe behind iron bars, in chains and darkness. As for you, you shall be sold as slaves, or drudge at the loom as my house-thralls—but first I will make sure that cunning rogue is well shackled. . . ."

Thereupon he hastened within, and the dismayed followers of the Lydian raised their lament anew in sweet, unpremeditated strains: "*O queenly Dirce, maiden blest,*" they sang, "*Nymph of the fair Fount that waters Thebes, thou that sawest the miracle*

of our Dionysus' entry into his Father's womb, O wherefore is he rejected of thee and all thy city? Behold he cometh to his own, and his own receive him not; nevertheless they shall surely yet do him service, when his glory shall appear. But now they set him at nought, and despitefully entreat his chosen Servant. Woe is me for our fellow-acolyte, our hierophant and guide, cast into cruel bondage by this savage tyrant Pentheus. How long, O Son of Zeus, wilt thou not avenge the sufferings of thy prophet? Hear us, wheresoever thou art leading now thy revel-rout—on sacred Nysa, or Pieria's Muse-haunted steep, or through leafy glades of Olympus—come, O Bacchus, in thy might, brandishing thy golden thyrsus-dart, and quell the fury of the oppressor!"

That prayer had scarce left the singers' lips when a great voice shook the air—"Ho, Bacchantes! Ho, Bacchantes! List to my call!"

"Who speaks? Who calls us?" they cried, trembling and amazed; and the voice came again, "It is I, it is I, the Son of Semele and of Zeus!"

At the same instant, the flickering tongues of fire in the ruined bower burst into dazzling flame; and with hollow roar a shock of earthquake set the massy palace walls swaying, and rent apart its marble entablature.

"My King! my King!" shrieked the affrighted women, "thou art come indeed! . . . Look, sisters, look, the palace reels to its fall. . . . Bacchus will lay it even with the ground, and his foes within it! . . . We praise, we adore thee—be merciful unto us, O thou most mighty!" And with one

accord they flung themselves on their faces, and lay quivering with terror, not enduring to behold the awful visitation of the god.

But it seemed he willed not, after all, to overthrow the palace, lest the innocent should perish with the guilty; the earth ceased to tremble and the blaze that had filled the courtyard died suddenly away. And then a well-known voice bade the Bacchantes arise and be of good cheer—the voice of their Lydian guide. Joyfully they sprang up, and, to their wonder, saw him standing there alone, unfettered, still wearing all his bright array, and the ivy-crown yet on his flowing hair. "Praise to the god," cried one, "for this blest relief! Without you, kind comrade, to defend us, we felt ourselves lost indeed. But how have you escaped out of the hands of that godless King?"

"I was my own deliverer," answered the youth, smiling, "and—found escape easy."

"But," cried another, "did not Pentheus bind you in chains, as he threatened?"

"He did so with his own hands—in fancy," replied the Lydian, "but, in fact, he never touched me. For, overtaking me and his guards on the threshold of the dungeon cell, he took the chains from them and sent them away; and then, catching sight of a bull tethered in the neighbouring stall, he took no more heed of *me*, but strove to fetter the limbs of the plunging beast! Furiously he struggled with it, panting hard and gnashing his teeth, until the sweat poured from his brow; and I the while sat close by, very still, regarding him.

Just then it was that Dionysus sent the earthquake, and the great blaze of light from Semele's tomb; which Pentheus no sooner beheld than he rushed within the palace, crying to his servants to bring water, for the house was on fire; and all the household were busied with that fruitless toil, until the red glare suddenly faded. Forthwith the King raised a new outcry that I had escaped; and—so at least I deem—the god sent a phantom in my likeness before his eyes; for he drew his sword and fell to hewing and stabbing the air, as though he saw me before him—where nothing was. Thus without let or hindrance I stole away hither—but hark, I hear his footfall! Ay, yonder he comes; now, be not afraid, friends, for I shall know how to deal with him, threaten he never so loudly."

Even as he spoke, Pentheus came leaping down the steps of the palace porch, shouting, "Treason, treason! The stranger I bound fast but now is 'scaped!" His eyes, rolling in frenzy, lighted on the serene figure of the Lydian. "Ah," he cried, springing towards him, "there he stands! What means this, villain? How broke you out of your prison?"

"Stand back, Pentheus," quietly replied the Stranger, "and curb your violence. Said I not the god would deliver me out of your hands? But now, listen to the tidings that yon runner brings you from the hills; fear not I shall escape the while, for I will not leave you . . . yet."

Strange it was to see how, at a wave of his hand, the King turned obediently towards the newcomer,

and composedly bade him declare his errand. The man, one of his own herdsmen, came running up fiery-faced with speed and covered with dust. "I bring tidings from Cithaeron, King," he panted out, "marvellous and dreadful tidings . . . but I fear 't will anger you to hear them."

"Take breath, man, and say on," Pentheus curtly bade him.

"Nay, but have I your leave to speak freely?" urged the herdsman; "your pardon—but I know your royal mind is prompt to wrath, and I shall suffer, belike, for offending your ears with my story."

"Tell it out forthright and fear not," answered Pentheus, "for I promise to hold you blameless."

And thus the herdsman told his tale: "As I was herding the kine in a sunny glade, I lighted unawares upon three companies of women, all lying asleep on beds of oak-leaves and fir-branches, amongst whom were Agave the Queen Mother and her sisters. A comely sight they were, and far different from what you, Lord, would suppose, who accuse the Bacchanals of lust and drunkenness; for they reclined each apart in attitudes of seemly modesty. Now I drew back softly, and hid myself behind a pine, fearing to disturb them; but just then the lowing of the kine awoke Agave your mother, who sprang up and roused the rest with a loud halloo. At that, all leaped to their feet broad awake, wondrous fair to look upon in their gay attire—young and old were there, matrons and unwedded maids. First, they loosened their snooded

tresses and clasped on their fawnskins—and I marked that some twined live snakes for a girdle round the dappled folds and suffered the tame beasts to lick their cheeks! And some, mothers milky-breasted, were dandling and giving suck to young fawns or to wolf-cubs, as to their own deserted babes. But O, had you seen, my King, what wonders next befell, you must have adored this god whom you revile! For one of the Bacchantes with her ivied thyrsus smote upon a rock, and a stream of clear water gushed forth, whereof she drank; another let down her fennel wand into the earth, and lo, the god sent up a fount of wine for her through the hollow stem! I saw others scoop runnels with their fingers in the turf, that straightway flowed with milk! I saw honey dropping from the thyrsus-garlands, whereof she that would took her fill! . . .

"But when they had feasted thus, they began their divine rites, with whirling dances and with flourishing of wands, chanting the while and crying aloud upon the god by mystic names—'*Iacchus! Evian! Bromius!*'—till all the woods resounded with their clamour. And the noise brought my fellow-herdsmen and shepherds to the glade, whom I intercepted and bade lie close in covert, to watch these strange doings; but one, a glib-tongued town-trapesing loon, advised us to capture Queen Agave; 'For, comrades,' quoth he, 'we shall assuredly win favour and rewards from the King if we bring away his mother from these proscribed orgies.'

"In an evil hour, we took his counsel; as the

dancing Bacchanals passed our place of ambush we sprang out upon them—I, who was nearest to her, made to seize Agave—but she stood fiercely at bay, shrieking, 'To me, my coursing hounds, to me! The hunters be upon me! After them, after them—smite with the thyrsus—rend and slay!' With that, the whole crew bore down on us like raging Furies, and had we not fled for our lives, we had certainly been rent in pieces. For when they saw we outran them, they flew in their frenzy on the grazing herd, and with their bare hands did they tear groaning calves and heifers limb from limb —yea, fierce bulls with tossing horns might you see dragged to earth by a band of girls, and torn asunder quicker than you can wink your royal eyes! Alow and aloft the Maenads[1] flung their gory spoils, till many a pine-tree bore the ghastly trophy of reeking limb or shoulder. Then, on they bounded, swift as birds can fly, down the mountain-side, and swooped upon the hamlets of the plain, Hysiae and Erythrae, like a marauding host; wrecking and pillaging house after house, and carrying off much booty of bronze and iron tripods and caldrons, for no burden was so heavy but they swung it lightly to their shoulders, where it sat steady as though tied thereon. Little children, too, they caught up and bore away in like manner. Now the villagers came out against them with swords and staves—and there was wrought another wonder, not without power divine; for those weapons broke hurtless against the frail thyrsus of the Maenads, wherewith they,

[1] Μαίναδες = lit. "Madwomen."

although women, wounded and put to flight a host of men. And having triumphed thus, back they sped to that glade of Cithaeron, and washed off the blood of their victims in the rill that their god set flowing for them out of the rock, while their serpents licked the stains of conflict from their cheeks with forked tongues. My tale is told, O King, but I am fain to add one word more—receive this deity, be he who he may, into your city of Thebes; for marvellous are his works, as I bear witness."

A moment of tense silence followed the herdsman's recital, broken by the exultant voice of one of the Asian women. "Albeit," she cried, "frank utterance is not for royal ears, I will make bold to say—*There is no greater god than Dionysus!*" At the sound of that name, the King, who had listened passively all this while, started like a man suddenly awakened, "I must stamp out this fire that rages among us," he exclaimed, "or we shall be the laughing-stock of all Hellas. Intolerable disgrace, that our men should flee from women! Go, my churl, call the citizens to arms; bid them proclaim a general levy of horse and foot; let spearmen, bowmen, slingers, muster at the Electran Gate, to march against the Bacchanals. Away, say I will be there anon!"

And away the herdsman went, but with a look that told he had little will to that errand. Then said the Stranger, "Pentheus, no words of mine, it seems, can move you—yet, for all your hard usage of me, I will warn you once again. Beware, I say, of taking arms against Dionysus; let him alone;

he will not suffer you to drive his Maenads from their mountain orgies. Were I you, O King, I would rather offer him sacrifice, than kick against the pricks; for how shall a mortal man resist a god?"

"Offer him sacrifice?" repeated Pentheus with a brutal laugh, "Ay, that I will, when we have raided the glens of Cithaeron—he shall have a hecatomb of butchered women!"

"Nay," replied the other, "if you go to Cithaeron, you and all your host will be shamefully routed; Thebes shall behold her bronze-shielded warriors driven in headlong flight by the Bacchantes' wands."

"Will no one rid me of this pestilent stranger?" exclaimed the King, querulously; "am I never to hear the end of his prating? I am tired—tired."

An immense weariness seemed, indeed, to have suddenly quenched his rage; his head drooped forward, and he closed his eyes with a heavy sigh. The Stranger looked at him attentively, and, in tones of winning gentleness, "Friend," he said, "it is not too late to amend all this. Let *me* go to Cithaeron, and I will bring the women peaceably home again."

"O me, more trickery!" groaned Pentheus. "What is he plotting now?"

"How if I am plotting to—save you?" answered the Stranger, earnestly.

But the King's mood had veered again. "To cozen me, you mean," he shouted, "and go off scot free to your revel-crew. No, that you shall not! Ho, slaves within there, bring me out my arms.

And you, have done with your gabble—I will not hear another word."

A deep-drawn sigh broke from the Stranger's lips; he fixed his eyes on the King's, went quickly up to him, and said in a changed voice, "*Shall we go and spy upon the Maenads in their resting-place —you and I together?*"

And, to the utter amazement of the Asian women, Pentheus eagerly rejoined, "Yes, yes, with all my heart! Why, man, I would give untold gold to see them at their secret orgies! Come, guide me to the place this instant—why do you loiter?"

"Wait," said the Stranger, "we must first disguise you as a woman, for if they catch sight of you as you are, they will kill you on the spot."

"True, true," said the King, nodding his head sagely; "very well thought on; you are a shrewd fellow—I have said so all along. But I cannot don a woman's garb—that were unseemly."

"As you will," said the Stranger, indifferently; "if you no longer desire to see the Maenads—'tis nought to me."

"But I do!" cried Pentheus, "only—what will the Thebans think, if they see me go through the streets in such array?"

"They will *not* see you," was the answer, "I will conduct you through by-ways where we shall not meet a soul."

Still Pentheus wavered. "Come with me into the house," he said, "I must consider longer of this matter. But go to Cithaeron I will; whether I

go armed at the head of my warriors—as I meant—or follow the plan you have devised."

"The net is spread, women," said the Lydian, as the King passed into the palace, "and the prey all but enmeshed; the rest is in thy hands—Dionysus! Do thou first bereave the man of his wits, possessing him with flighty madness; for while he keeps a gleam of sanity he will never consent to put on woman's weeds. Ah, may I see the Thebans laugh their King to scorn as he traverses the city in that masquerade! . . . Now I go within, to attire him for his journey to—Hades, whither he shall be sped by . . . his mother's hands. Yea, he shall learn at last what manner of god is Zeus-born Dionysus!" . . .

Who shall say by what means that god wrought his will on the doomed Pentheus, and quenched the last spark of reason in a mind already diseased? Idle it were to guess how the Stranger prevailed; enough that he did so, and in brief space led forth the King habited as a Bacchante, with trailing robe, long tresses bound by a parti-coloured snood, and ivy-wreathed thyrsus in hand. Awestruck, the Asian women gazed on this travesty of themselves as he reeled dizzily onwards, and listened to his wild, disjointed talk.

"Why, what is this?" he babbled, "I see a pair of suns overhead and a pair of seven-gated towns below! . . . And you, my Guide, whom I took for a man, now seem a bull—to judge from your shape, and those horns sprouting from your head! Was it a beast I talked with all the time—or what are you?"

" The god escorts you," said the Stranger with an ambiguous smile, " unpropitious of late, he has made truce with us; and now you see things as—you should."

" Well, and how do I look, think you? " ran on the King, " should I pass muster for a princess, eh? Have I not just the carriage of Ino, or my mother herself? "

" The resemblance is perfect," returned his guide, gravely. " But let me bind up that lock you have shaken loose from the headband, and adjust the folds of your robe—the girdle, too, needs buckling closer. Still a moment, while I tire your head—it is my office. . . ."

" Do so, do so," said Pentheus complacently, while the Stranger gave a few deft touches to his array, " ay, I have something disordered my curls with practising the true Bacchic toss of the head you were showing me just now. . . . And while I think on it, pray show me, how does one hold the thyrsus? O, in the right hand, advancing the right foot as you flourish it—I see! Ha, ha! Methinks, now, I shall carry off Cithaeron's hill on my shoulders, Bacchantes and all, so strong I feel! But shall I dig it up with crowbars, or will my hands suffice? "

" Nay, you must not uproot the haunts of the Nymphs, where Pan loves to sit piping," answered the Stranger; " remember, you are going to spy upon the Maenads, warily and stealthily, lurking among the thick pines."

" So I am! " exclaimed Pentheus, laughing, " and I warrant I shall find the pretty birds limed in

Love's own sweet snares. And *you* will show me the place—come, let us be going."

"Yes, Pentheus, I will conduct you there," said the Stranger, "*but the queen, your mother, will bring you home.*" And lifting up his eyes towards the hills, he murmured, "Stretch forth your hands, O Agave, and ye, her sisters, in welcome of this young athlete whom I lead to an Olympic contest, wherein I—and Dionysus—shall prove victor!" Then said he to the Asian women, "Have patience, friends, yet a little while; and tarry here until I return to you, for then shall you behold your god triumphant over his enemies." With that, he took Pentheus by the hand and led him away.

It was high noon when those two departed; and through long, hot hours of the summer's day the companions of the Lydian Stranger waited patiently, as he had bidden them, in the palace-court; now slumbering on the broad steps of the portico, now uplifting their voices to Bacchus in prayer or praise. None molested them; the few slaves, who from time to time traversed the courtyard on household errands, eyed them curiously, but passed by without speech. The sun was low in the West when a loud cry broke the stillness; and looking up, they beheld a man in the dress of the King's guards running at full speed through the gateway that led to the city. Haggard was his look, and he wrung his hands as he came, crying in a lamentable voice, "Woe unto this house, this royal-rich house of Cadmus! Woe, woe, unto us all—Pentheus, our Lord, is dead!"

"What say you? *Dead?*" shrilled the women joyously as they crowded round him, "then we are free! O our god and king, thou art become exceeding glorious!"

The man halted, and with indignant surprise, "How now, strangers," he said, "do you exult over my prince's fall? Fie on you, are you not ashamed to laugh and sing while all Thebes mourns?"

"Dionysus! Dionysus!" they all cried out; "his we are and him we serve—not Thebes."

"You are barbarians," retorted the man, "and know no better, so I will e'en let you alone." And he strode to the palace porch, where all that were left at home of the King's retainers had gathered meanwhile; hushed and motionless they stood, staring at the bringer of those ill news as if they doubted whether they could have heard him aright. "Stay, stay," one of the Bacchantes entreated him, "tell us more; what manner of doom cut off that sinner in his sin?"

"It has to be told," said the henchman with a groan; "I will tell it here, then. Friends, my fellow-servants, listen to the most grievous tidings that ever Thebes has heard! By the King's command, I followed him as he went forth from the city with the Lydian Stranger for guide; through the plain we went, and forded the Asopus, and so to the heights of Cithaeron. There, on the edge of a deep, turfy dell, overhung by silver firs, the Stranger halted, made us a sign to keep still, and pointed downward through the screen of interlacing boughs. We looked—and there were the Maenads sitting

quietly by the rushing brook in the midst of the dell, some busied in trimming up their wands with fresh ivy garlands, others singing a sacred roundelay. But my unhappy master, it seemed, could not discern what they were about, for he said, '*Stranger, from where we stand I cannot well see these wantons. Could I but climb some knoll, or lofty fir-tree, I might have clear view of their infamous doings.*' Then it was I began to see the Stranger making magic! For he stretched out his arm and grasped the top of a high-soaring fir, and bent it down, down, down to earth, until the stem was rounded like a bended bow—a feat beyond mortal strength. And setting Pentheus astride its topmost branch, he let the tree rise aloft again between his hands, slowly and gently, taking heed not to dislodge him from his perch. And scarcely had the King thus appeared in full view of the Maenads, when the Stranger—disappeared; but a voice—the voice of Dionysus, as I guess—resounded from upper air, '*Damsels, arise, for I have brought unto you the man that had my rites and Me in derision! Up now, and take vengeance upon him!*' Therewithal earth and sky were illumined with a fiery glow, mystic, wonderful; a solemn stillness held all the air; not a leaf stirred in the glen; no cry of beast or bird broke the silence of the hills. And the Maenads, starting up, at first looked wildly round, hearing a voice, but seeing no man; then the god spoke the second time, in the same words; whereat the daughters of Cadmus and all their company, filled with his divine frenzy, rushed tumultuously through the glen, questing hither and

thither for their prey. Whom when they saw, high on the tree-top, they first assailed with showers of stones and withered pine-branches; and many a thyrsus was hurled at him, javelin-wise, but all fell short of the miserable mark. Next, they strove to dig up his fir-tree by the roots with tough oaken stakes; but that, too, proved fruitless labour. Then cried Queen Agave, 'O Maenads, make a ring and pull down the perch of yon climbing beast, and let us seize him, that he bewray not our sacred mysteries!' Straightway the whole multitude closed about the tree—a thousand hands dragged at stem and boughs—and down it crashed, together with the shrieking King. Vain were his cries for mercy—vainly he pleaded with Agave to have pity on the son of her womb; in the madness wherewith Bacchus had avenged her impiety, she knew him not; foaming at the mouth, with wildly-rolling eyes, she flew upon him as a hound flies on the deer. Her sisters followed—the three seized each a limb—tearing the sinews with strength not mortal —I saw Agave plant foot upon his breast and rend away the right shoulder—ah, how can I tell the rest of that horror? Sick at heart, I fled from my ambush to bring Thebes word of Pentheus' fearful end. O friends, who can think thereon and not confess that to rule one's spirit and revere the gods is man's highest wisdom?"

Just then, with such a long and loud halloo as hunters raise at the death of the deer, Agave herself rushed into the courtyard; dancing and leaping she came on, tossing her head far back with a

strange convulsive motion; her right hand held stiffly out at arm's length the garlanded, be-ribboned thyrsus—topped where the fir-cone had been by a ghastly, bleeding head. A groan of horror burst from all the household; but the Queen, as if she neither heard nor saw them, joyously hailed the Asian Bacchanals: "Look, sisters, look," she raved, brandishing the dreadful trophy, "behold this lion's whelp—*I* slew him on Cithaeron—alone I did it, weaponless—yea, wrenched his head off with my bare hands—in the strength of Dionysus our god! Aha, huntsmen of Thebes—I have outdone you now! With all your spears and nets, have you ever brought home spoils like this? . . . But where is my Pentheus? I long to hear him praise his mother's exploit. Quick, call him, some of you; bid him come and mount—a ladder—and nail me this lion's head high over our lintel—that all Thebes may see what Agave brought home from her hunting!"

At this moment Cadmus appeared in the court-yard, followed by six retainers, who carried on their shoulders a black-draped bier. After these came a group of Theban citizens, having their clothes rent and dust upon their heads. The aged King had exchanged his Bacchic livery for a coarse black mantle; his thin, grey locks were likewise sprinkled with dust; but he walked more firmly than before, and by his mournful yet composed bearing it was plain that something of his younger self had awoke in him under the stress of calamity. At sight of the distraught Queen and the thing she bore, he paused, shuddering, and covered his eyes with his

mantle; then, signing to his followers to keep back, the old man quietly approached his daughter, calling her by name.

"Ah, father," she cried, turning her wild eyes upon him, "we meet in a lucky hour! Now, verily, you may boast that never man had daughters to equal yours. *Daughters*, I said—but 'tis of me you may be proudest. I have a soul above weaving and spinning, look you—I am a hunter—a lion-catcher! See my spoils, father—this head—here, take it, 'tis for you, a splendid trophy for your palace-walls. Call your friends and neighbours together and feast them in honour of this auspicious day—happy, thrice-happy man that you are!"

"O Bacchus, Bacchus," groaned the old King, shrinking from the proffered gift, "justly hast thou meted doom—yet sure in too exceeding measure—unto us that are thine own kin."

"Why, how now, Father," said Agave impatiently, "wherefore these glum looks? Alas, what peevish kill-joys these old men are! . . . And Pentheus is as bad, with his stiff, austere ways—pity he takes not to the chase like his mother . . . but no, making war on the gods is all *he* cares for. You should reprove him, my father! . . . But why does he not come? Let some one fetch him instantly to see this good luck of mine!"

"Alas, alas," said Cadmus, "I could almost wish her madness might last for ever, rather than she should awake to such misery."

"Misery!" exclaimed his daughter. "Small

cause have *I* to be miserable, I trow! Why do you talk so strangely? "

"Listen to me, my child," said Cadmus with a gentle authority, "I have some questions to ask you. First, look up at the sky, and describe what you see."

Agave looked up, and as she gazed on the heavens the wild gleam faded out of her eyes; she said in her natural tone, "Methinks the sky looks brighter —and loftier—than it did just now. And—somehow—I feel a change—as if I were—coming to myself."

"Then you can tell me, can you not," said her father, watching her intently, "what was your husband's name? "

"Echion of Thebes," she answered, wonderingly. "You yourself chose him for my bridegroom."

"True," said Cadmus, "and the son you bore to him was called——? "

"We called him Pentheus," said Agave; "but, father, what idle questions are these? "

"I will ask but one more," he replied, slowly, "*what is that you are holding in your hand?* Look well, before you answer."

"A lion's head," she began; then, as she looked more nearly, broke into an agonised wail, "O gods, it cannot be—yes, yes it *is*, my son's head—my beloved son's! O, who hath murdered him, father? And how—how came *this* into my hands —without my knowing? "

The old man took the piteous relic from her hand, and shrouded it in his mantle. "Child," he said,

his voice breaking with pity, "I doubt if you can bear to hear the truth—yet."

"Ah!" she moaned with a shudder, "I begin to guess. Speak, speak, the truth cannot be worse than what I fear."

"You shall hear it, then," said Cadmus. "You and your sisters killed him."

"*I killed him,*" repeated Agave, with a dazed look; "but how was it—where were we? Here, in the house?"

"No, on Cithaeron," faltered the King—and could say no more.

"I cannot understand," persisted the trembling woman; "what took us all to Cithaeron, and what were we doing on the hills?"

"Pentheus had followed you there," said Cadmus, "to mock at Dionysus and at his holy mysteries. For on you and your sisters, and on all the women of Thebes, the god had sent madness, because you despised and rejected him; saying that Semele's babe was no son of Zeus, but base-born, and herself had played the harlot."

"I remember, I see it all now," cried the wretched mother with heartrending sobs; "'tis Dionysus hath destroyed my son—and me, and me!"

"Yea, daughter," said the old King mournfully, "his wrath is come upon us all; behold, he hath made me bear the iniquity of my children, and my house is left unto me desolate. Now whosoever will may oppress and insult him that once was the great Cadmus, the Dragon-Slayer, the Founder of a noble city! Ah, Pentheus, child of my hopes,

stay and shield of my feeble age, never more will the old man feel the touch of thy hand, never hear thy loved voice call him grandsire. Alas, how often thou would'st say, '*What is it, sir, that troubles you? Has any man failed in respect, or wronged you in aught? Tell me, my father, that I may make him rue his insolence.*' But thou art gone—O heavy change!—reft from us in thy prime by a hideous doom; and we that loved thee are become of all mortals most miserable."

Then came the crowning wonder of that day of miracles. For suddenly a light above the brightness of the sun shone forth over the palace-roof, making an orb of splendour in the twilit air; and in that glory was seen One fairer than the sons of men, crowned with an ivy-wreath, robed in a flame-tinted robe, and girt about the breast with a golden girdle. And all that saw him trembled; but in the hearts of the Asian women joy mingled with awe; for they saw that his face was the face of the Lydian Stranger, albeit transfigured now by the radiant bloom of a god.

And thus spoke the Heavenly Vision: "O many-wintered Theban King, not in wrath come I, Zeus-born Dionysus, unto thee, but in compassion of thy desolate age. Behold, this day have Agave and her sisters paid one price for all their sin against me and against my sweet Mother; and now must they go forth into banishment, forasmuch as a kinsman's blood is upon their heads, even the blood of Pentheus, whose fate shall be a warning forever unto such as contemn the gods. Yet fain would I

have saved him; but he hardened his heart until there was no remedy. But thee, Cadmus, art not fated to end thy days miserably in Thebes, seeing thou hast for bedfellow the daughter of Warrior Ares and immortal Aphrodite. To thee and to Harmonia thy wife the gods will grant release from the burden of age and grief, and new life in other forms among the glens of Illyria, on the far Adriatic shore. And now farewell; for I go hence on another journey, long and arduous even to a god; to the dim shades of underground must I fare, that I may bring Semele, my mother, out of the prison-house of Hades to dwell with me in the blissful halls of Zeus, beloved and honoured evermore by the glorious fellowship of the Olympians. Such boon hath my great Sire vouchsafed his son."

Now in short space was all the word of Dionysus fulfilled. And lightly, as gods can, he wafted Cadmus and Harmonia far from dolorous Thebes to their new home, where they suffered magic change into two bright-eyed, gentle Snakes. For never can their last state be misery whose bridals the high gods adorn and beautify with their presence.

> "Therefore they did not end their days
> In sight of blood; but were rapt, far away,
> To where the west wind plays,
> And murmurs of the Adriatic come
> To those untrodden mountain lawns: and there,
> Placed safely in changed forms, the Pair
> Wholly forget their first sad life, and home,
> And all that Theban woe, and stray
> For ever through the glens, placid and dumb."

REFERENCES

CHAPTER I

The whole of this chapter is taken from the *Theogony* of Hesiod (on which see Introduction, pp. 3-5); except the account of the Golden Age (p. 18), which is from the *Works and Days* (Introduction, p. 4), ll. 109-126.

CHAPTER II

P. 34 *sqq.* "*the second, or Silver Race of men.*" The description of the Silver and Bronze Races is from *Works and Days*, ll. 127-155.

Pp. 37-38. The account of the arts taught to men by Prometheus paraphrases his speech in the *Prometheus Bound* of Aeschylus, ll. 444-514.

P. 40. The deceiving of Zeus by Prometheus at the sacrifice is from the *Theogony*, ll. 534 *sqq.* This curious and primitive legend is ignored by Aeschylus.

P. 43 *sqq.* The making and marriage of Pandora (the Greek Eve) is from *Works and Days*, ll. 59-105.

CHAPTER III

Follows throughout the *Prometheus Bound* of Aeschylus (525-456 B.C.), omitting the episode of Io (see *infra*, chap. iv.). "The *Prometheus Bound* (probably later than 468) is an immortal masterpiece of creative imagination, moving, with Titanic power, amidst supernatural beings and elemental forces, yet presenting that vast and weird spectacle with unfailing obedience to the Hellenic instinct for clearness and for measure."—*Jebb*.

CHAPTER IV

The story of Io (pp. 60-76) is taken from the above play, in which she appears as a horned, or cow-headed maiden. Her wanderings have brought her to the scene of Prometheus' punishment, and from him she learns her further journeying and destined release.

CHAPTER V

is based on the Homeric Hymn (V.) to Demeter (see Introduction, p. 6).

CHAPTER VI

The legend of Rhodes and birth-story of Athena are from Pindar's Seventh Olympian Ode (464 B.C.).

CHAPTER VII

The first and second parts of this chapter paraphrase respectively the Homeric Hymn to the *Delian*, and to the *Pythian* Apollo (I., II.). The Delian Hymn, the earlier of the two, was attributed by Thucydides to Homer himself, and may be of the seventh century B.C. The story of Cyrene (p. 137) is exquisitely told by Pindar in his Ninth Pythian Ode (474 B.C.).

CHAPTER VIII

A free rendering of the Homeric Hymn to Hermes (III.). See Introduction, p. 6.

CHAPTER X

Aphrodite's adventure with the Herdsman is the subject of the Homeric Hymn to her (IV.).

CHAPTER XI

The somewhat disproportionate length of this chapter is due to the compiler's wish to give (pp. 196—end) a prose narrative version of Euripides' *Bacchae* (produced after the poet's death in 406 B.C.); not with any hope of conveying to the reader the extraordinary glow and glamour of the original—the best verse translations hardly succeed in that—but because of the play's special interest as a mythological document. The legends of Semele and of the double birth of Dionysus (pp. 191-3) are combined from the Prologue and from references in the play; that of Lycurgus (p. 194) is first found in Homer, *Iliad*, vi. 129-140.

EVERYMAN.
I WILL GO WITH
THEE.
& BE THY GVIDE
IN THY MOST NEED
TO GO BY THY SIDE

100557

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A 000 686 190 0